





*International Association of Research
in Foreign Language Education and Applied Linguistics*

ELT Research Journal

Founded	Volume	Issues	e-ISSN
2012	9	21	2146-9814

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ABOUT THIS JOURNAL

ELT Research Journal is a peer-reviewed international journal devoted to the publication of articles and general issues relating to research in English Language Teaching as a foreign/second language around the world. The ELT Research Journal is a forum for constructive dialogue among researchers who seek to illuminate current and emerging areas of interest to the workers of the field.

WRITING RULES

The content of the journal is available only in English.

Length of articles

The length of articles, excluding appendices and bibliography, should be between 3.000 and 8.000 words. Longer articles of academic importance and topical interest may, however, be considered.

Title

The title of the paper should be less than 13 words.

Abstract

The abstract (between 120-200 words) should be followed immediately by the Key Words (maximum 6) used in the article.

Full Text

Since ELT Research Journal is published in English, manuscripts should be submitted only in English.

Format of Electronic Articles

Articles sent to the journal in electronic form - Microsoft Word 97 or later - should be written in Times New Roman 12 point with double line spacing and justified on left. Margins should be arranged to 2.54cm on the right and left, and at the top and bottom. Page numbers, headers, and footers should not be used. Explanatory notes should be given as endnotes before the references, not as footnotes.

Tables and Figures

Any special characters used in the text should be sent together with the article. Tables, graphics, figures, and photographs included in the article must be inserted in the text. Tables need to be drawn according to APA guidelines. Any papers that do not conform to the policies outlined above in the style guidelines cannot be considered for publication in the Journal.

Referring to Other People's Work in the Text

References within the text should be shown in brackets with the surname, date and/or page number [e.g. (Riding & Rayner, 1998, p. 1) or (Riding & Rayner, 1998)]. All references should be shown in the references section. Extracts of less than 40 words should be shown between the lines in "quotation marks" whereas longer ones should be indented 1,25 cm from the left and right margins without quotation marks as a block.

Example

In their conclusion to their review of cognitive styles and learning strategies, Riding and Rayner (1998, p. 190) conclude that

Much of the work on style to date has been exploratory in nature – mapping the ground. The next stage is now required to systematically investigate the aspects, nature, role, relationship to other constructs and practical applications of style. This should significantly advance the understanding of individual differences and indicate the extent of the practical importance of style.

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Dear Reader,

We, as the Editorial Team of the ELT Research Journal, are happy to announce the release Volume 9 Issue 1 of the ELT Research Journal. The ELT Research Journal aims to set up a highly qualified international academic platform for those involved in language education and teaching practices.

The first article presents the process of teaching a foreign language in the distance education system compared to the traditional, in-class teaching system, which is very likely to draw attention of our readers due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The second paper aims to investigate how both microteaching and school-based experiences increase awareness level of student teachers of English for the teaching profession. The third study investigates how peace education is integrated with the new English language teaching program (ELTP) of lower secondary education of Turkey. The fourth article provides a review of Processability Theory from a critical perspective and investigates the limitations of and ambiguities in the theory through examining previous studies. The fifth article aims to seek answers to an ongoing problem of drop-outs and failures place in the EFL environment in a voluntary intensive English program at a state university in Turkey. The last study of the issue aims to explore a more practical way to make vocabulary learning and listening comprehension easier.

We would like to thank all the researchers who have contributed to the current issue of the journal with their invaluable academic works. We would also like to thank all editors, co-editors and reviewers of the ELT-RJ for their voluntary contribution to the journal by managing the review process.

Best Regards,

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Available online at:
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*International Association of Research
in Foreign Language Education and
Applied Linguistics*
ELT Research Journal
2020, 9(1), 9-27
ISSN: 2146-9814

A comparative study of Bosnian and Herzegovinian adult foreign language students' attitudes to teaching four skills in classroom and distance language learning systems

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Received: 2020-02-03 Accepted: 2020-06-30

Abstract

Widespread use of information and communication technology is a cornerstone of today's society. This results in significant changes in communication, information flow, business operations, gaining knowledge and other aspects of life. Needs and requirements in the field of education are, thus, also changing. Skills for autonomous research and lifelong learning are gaining importance. Educational institutions and teachers as individuals are faced with the challenge of changing the concept of knowledge delivery which has to imply almost inevitable integration of modern technology. Considering the need to change educational systems in accordance with the changes in the society, marked by constant increase of information and knowledge base as well as by dynamic and fast paced development of information and communication technology, distance education is becoming an increasingly significant concept. A need to learn foreign languages is always present, regardless of teaching methods. This paper considers possibilities and specific elements throughout the process of teaching a foreign language in the distance education system compared to the traditional, in-class teaching system. The goal of the research is to analyze whether the methods of foreign language teaching used in the distance education system can be as equally efficient as the traditional teaching methods and whether the lack of face-to-face contact in the distance education system can be compensated by the use of information and communication technology.

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Keywords: *Distance education and online learning, Adult learning, Teaching/learning strategies*

Introduction

The concept of distance education has been the subject of numerous studies from different perspectives, such as the willingness of teachers or students to engage in this process, the evaluation of software platforms for this type of knowledge delivery, the interaction between teachers and students, and the problem of students' withdrawal from distance learning courses.

There was a tendency to understand that the focus of such a system of education is on technology. However, educators who are experienced in working within such a system claim that technology is not as important as other factors such as student motivation and other pedagogical aspects and understanding the context of distance education and the requirements it places on those who participate in it.

The aim of this paper is to provide an insight into the advantages and disadvantages of teaching foreign language by means of the distance education system, and to define guidelines and suggestions for the improvement of this form of teaching. The results of the analysis of the possibilities and effectiveness of methods for learning and teaching a foreign language via the distance education system could be particularly useful and applicable at educational institutions at which foreign languages are taught. The basic hypothesis of this research is that the methods utilized in the teaching of a foreign language in the distance education system can be as effective as the methods applied within the classical teaching approach. It is additionally assumed that the use of modern information and communication technologies in the process of teaching a foreign language in the distance education system can compensate for the lack of direct contact between the lecturer and the student.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, awareness of the importance of education is still underdeveloped, and people are burdened and preoccupied with existential problems, and too little informed about alternative forms of education, knowledge is not appreciated, and the state has not yet done everything in its power to secure conditions for lifelong learning programs not to mention distance education programs. However, there additionally exist examples of positive practices of individual higher education institutions which make efforts to follow trends in the development of higher education and adapt their work systems to those trends.

Literature review

The number of academic programs organized with the aid of the distance education system by public and private educational institutions is increasing every year (Boling, Krinsky, Saleem & Stevens, 2011). As participants in the higher education process become more technologically aware, electronic systems of knowledge delivery will not be an exception in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Research and improvement of the quality of electronic education systems in order to achieve the same effects as in the traditional teaching environment is enhancing in the field of higher education.

Although the general notion supports the belief that the use of distance education systems is most widespread in information education, recent research (Holmes & Gardner 2006; Kearsley, 2005; Garrison & Anderson, 2003; White, 2003; Keegan, 2000) shows that this system can be effectively applied in different fields of education. Similar to any other field in the education system, the process of learning a foreign language is transforming due to the use of modern technologies. In the past, there was a great deal of discussion and research on whether technology should be integrated into the foreign language learning process, but now the focus is shifting towards efforts to make the best use of technology, since its existence cannot be ignored.

Although the belief that the use of distance education systems is mainly widespread in information education is generally accepted, recent research (Holmes & Gardner 2006; Kearsley, 2005; Garrison & Anderson, 2003; White, 2003; Keegan, 2000) demonstrates that this system can be effectively applied in different fields of education. Similar to any other field of education, the process of learning a foreign language is changing due to the use of modern technologies. In the past, there were different opinions on the use of technology in foreign language learning process, but now the focus is shifting towards efforts to make the best use of the technology, since its existence cannot be ignored.

In the context of learning a foreign language, complex demands are placed before students. Shetzer (1998 quoted in Kasper 2000:96-97) states that ESL students must acquire linguistic competence in a new language and at the same time develop the cognitive and sociocultural skills necessary to gain access into the social, academic, and workforce environments of the 21st century. They must become functionally literate, able to speak, understand, read, and write English, as well as use English to acquire, articulate and expand their knowledge. They must also become academically literate, able to read and understand interdisciplinary texts, analyze and respond to those texts through various modes of written and oral discourse, [...] Further, they must become critically literate [...] to evaluate the validity and reliability of informational sources so that they may draw appropriate conclusions from their research efforts". Finally, in

our digital age of information, students must become electronically literate, able choose the most suitable tools for communication, learning, studying and research.

Foreign language teaching in the distance education system enables the development of language competences and, at the same time, the development of skills related to the use of contemporary information and communication technologies.

It can be denoted that the link between the development of technology and methods for teaching and learning foreign languages has been present since the invention of Gutenberg printing press, which resulted in the widespread distribution of written materials. However, over the last hundred years, this link has evolved beyond the physical level, by means of the efforts of researchers to establish connections between technology and the learning process at the psychological level. There is an increased interest in research into processes that exist in human consciousness and enable the acquisition of a foreign language. With the development of technology, teachers and researchers have sought ways to apply new discoveries as a form of support in the language learning process. However, the relation between language learning and technology has rarely been straightforward. Foreign language teachers have often shown a great deal of skepticism to the application of modern technological solutions to the language learning process.

In distance learning research, analyses pertaining to the field of foreign language learning take a marginal position. The reason is not only to the complexity of integrating all language skills into the virtual environment, but also to the expressed skepticism of a large number of teachers in terms of the possibility of developing linguistic competences in the electronic learning system.

However, the increasing integration of information and communication technologies into education is radically changing the way foreign language learning and teaching is conducted and motivates teachers to define new learning models and new teaching strategies. A growing number of higher education institutions are transferring themselves to the electronic way of teaching a foreign language and the use of computers as a means of interaction, collaboration and access to information. Modern technologies have brought about changes in the form of teaching materials and the way students approach these materials. In order to make the most of the benefits which new media can provide in the process of learning a foreign language, teachers should be aware that their role is changing. They now guide students through the learning process. Guidance involves planning, organizing, interacting with students, and supporting the learning process, as well as devising teaching strategies to maximize the benefits

of electronic learning. Teachers also face the challenge of evaluating ELT materials suitable for online use. They also must consider teacher-student interaction and student-student interaction in order to achieve effective learning.

The application of modern technologies provides numerous opportunities to solve problems which occur in a traditional face-to-face environment. The basic limitations that occur in traditional foreign language teaching environment are:

- work with a large number of students
- different levels of language proficiency
- absence from classes
- limited resources and lack of time for direct contact
- lack of time to provide personalized feedback, which discourages students from working independently
- lack of time for tasks involving voice communication and developing presentation skills
- low degree of interaction among students

Some of these limitations can be addressed in an adequately designed distance learning environment. A large number of students can simultaneously use the distance learning system, which provides flexibility in the learning process in various ways. Students can work at their own pace and have access to multimodal documents. (Curtis, Duchastel & Radic, 1999). Distance learning environments provide a personalized approach to learning, as well as conceptualization of activities for different learning styles and levels of language proficiency. Students can independently determine the learning sequence, select materials, tasks and activities, or identify what type and level of support they need (Cummins 2002). The concept of hypertextuality enables teachers to design activities in which students can receive support in various ways (e.g. through online vocabulary, clarification, examples) when they need it.

The main advantages of teaching foreign languages in the distance learning system are the indicated below (Warschauer, 1996; Wang Han, 2008):

- computers enable independent work at an individual pace, in time and place appropriate for students
- multimedia content which combines text, images, sounds, animations and videos easily integrates reading, writing, listening and speaking skills
- communication technology enables different forms of interaction between students and teachers, as well as among students themselves
- realistic learning environments can be created with the help of computers,

- application of modern technologies has a positive effect on motivation and autonomy in the learning process,
- the possibility to recycle the same teaching resources, which is very important in the learning process
- computers are ideal in terms of performing repetitive drill exercises, as they eliminate the fatigue or subjectivity factor and provide immediate feedback

When they leave their passive role as recipients of information and become active participants in the learning process, students require much more individual attention, which can create two problems. The first problem is reflected in the overwhelming number of students who want the teacher's attention for explanation and guidance. The teacher cannot answer all of these requests at the same time, so students have to wait, contact their peers, or feel deprived of the required attention due to lack of time. As a consequence, some may discover that there is a lack of feedback, attention in such a system.

At the same time, the fact that it is impossible for a teacher to respond to all requests can somehow force students to trust their peers and work closely with them, which is a very positive result and a valuable skill in the job market. Another problem is striking a balance between encouraging student autonomy and thus developing their capacity to learn autonomously and their need for feedback and support. For students who need a lot of guidance and for the analytical type of students, this lack of attention at some point can negatively affect their satisfaction and motivation. It can be claimed that this problem usually does not exist in a traditional environment.

Foreign language learning should be viewed in the context of the current trend of lifelong learning, which focuses on the social and economic benefits which result from the joint action of information, education, work and technology.

If we accept the claim that in many parts of the world today, through the educational process, student autonomy is developed and that learning process is generated in interaction, we can conclude that the traditional teaching process cannot provide the optimal environment for this form of learning (Legenhausen, 1999). In most cases, the linear structure of the classical teaching system does not provide much opportunity for additional measures and activities to develop discrete individual and group learning processes.

In the context of teaching and learning a foreign language, in addition to developing the four basic skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking, it is also necessary to work on skills which students will need in the labor market:

- individualization of learning through tasks which students freely select depending on their personal needs and interests
- promotion of learning through various activities of searching, selecting and transmitting information
- development of information literacy through the application of modern tools offered by new technologies
- development of the self-learning skills necessary for the lifelong learning process

Foreign language teaching materials in the distance education system

Foreign language teaching materials in the distance education system can be structured according to skills, with separate sections for reading, writing, listening and speaking.

Reading

Corresponding to Reading skill, emphasis is placed on activating students' background knowledge by combining text with graphic, audio and video materials. Electronic teaching materials allow users to focus on different parts of the text - in a non-linear way - to mark different items and to use additional, associated tasks and auxiliary materials. Reading skills can be significantly improved by utilizing the resources provided by the Internet. Thanks to the extensive electronic resources on the Internet, students have access to contemporary and motivating authentic texts of different genres. In addition, students can additionally participate in discussions with others who read the same text. A number of newspapers and magazines have their own blogs where readers can share their opinions and discuss what they read. The ability to discuss a text encourages the integration of written and spoken language production. For the initial level of learning a foreign language, it is avail to combine simultaneous listening and reading for the student to adapt to an oral and written system of a new language, whereby digital tools can be employed to repeat listening, marking parts of text or translating. Developing reading skills for each level of language proficiency can be encouraged by various tasks and exercises which require finding and linking information, synthesis of information, and discussions in spoken or written form.

Writing

The use of hypermedia and computers provides a number of opportunities to develop writing skills. Input information from a variety of sources, such as text, video, and audio materials, can create context so as to work on real-life tasks which require writing activities. Most modern-day students are aware and informed of the available resources which may be

useful in the process of writing in a foreign language. Nevertheless, the teacher should guide students in the process of finding and adequately utilizing available online resources. With specific assignments, students can be engaged in various stages of the writing skill development process. These assignments might include asking questions, providing models and examples to guide them in the process of producing a written text, etc. The teacher can present specific authentic linguistic models to their students in order to develop a sense of writing in a language they are learning. The advantage of the online environment is the ability to easily save and share not only the final product, but also the various stages of the writing process. It provides students with the opportunity to publish and share their texts with other users on forums and various websites, which positively affects students' motivation. In addition, the ability to publicly publish a text may be rewarding to the author of the text as their text will be viewed from distinct perspectives, but it can also assist other participants in the discussion of the text to develop their own writing skills.

Listening

It is desirable to practice listening skills through the process of replicating real-life situations in which listening is performed with the purpose of interaction. In this context, the input to the listening activity should be conceptualized in order to stimulate oral response. The distance learning system provides further opportunities to perform listening exercises than the traditional system. Namely, listening exercises in the distance learning system, in addition to audio and video content, also involve the application of various hypertext materials, such as text support (transcripts or additional information that can be displayed on the screen during listening) or electronic dictionaries, which students can access easily. Another significant difference from the classical system is that in the distance learning system, students have a much more active role, especially with regard to listening activities. These activities can also be associated with appropriate tasks such as summary writing, listening comprehension, semantic network creation, which encourages careful listening comprehension and analysis of listening materials for a specific purpose. One of the significant advantages provided by the distance learning system in the context of developing a listening skill, i.e. understanding, is that the resources and content that develops this skill can be accessed as many times as the user considers necessary. The Internet offers several opportunities to advance one's listening skills. Podcasts, some of which are tailor-made for student needs and other authentic listening materials are available in a variety of formats. It is desirable to practice listening skills through the process of replicating real-life situations in which listening is employed with the purpose of

interaction. In this context, the input to the listening activity should be conceptualized in order to stimulate the oral response. The distance learning system provides more opportunities for performing listening exercises than the traditional system. Namely, listening exercises in the distance learning system, in addition to audio and video content, also embrace the application of various hypertext materials, such as text support (transcripts or additional information that can be displayed on the screen during listening) or electronic dictionaries, which students can access very simply. Another substantial discrepancy from the classical system is that in the distance learning system, students have a much more active role, especially in terms of listening exercises. Listening exercises can also be associated with appropriate tasks such as writing a summary, replying to a listening content, creating a semantic network, etc. Writing tasks and discussing a listened-to record encourage careful listening and analysis for a specific purpose.

Speaking

Through hypermedia content, input information is combined in written and spoken form to create a context which requires student participation in speaking activities, individually or in interaction with other students. The main advantage of the distance learning system corresponding to these activities is the possibility to record a speech composition which can be listened to, analyzed and re-recorded until a satisfactory level is reached. In this way, it is possible to obtain a quality product since students have the opportunity to reorganize information and discover appropriate and accurate language forms and elements. Recording a speech also means that the conversation does not take place in the context of immediate contact. Therefore, students should pay special attention to performing this activity as there is no possibility of relying on the context and gestures present in direct communication.

Other advantages of the distance learning system for developing speaking skills are the availability of resources for comprehension and speech production, processing time, and perhaps most importantly, the opportunity for all students to perform in communicative activities as opposed to the traditional classroom environment where they are more advanced and more confident individuals have a kind of monopoly in this context.

Both asynchronous and synchronous communication, in written and spoken form, can be used to improve pronunciation. It is possible to use various exercises which focus the student's attention on specific sounds or combinations of sounds, and on the production of problematic sounds and patterns. One of the benefits of an online environment is the ability to listen to recorded tracks repeatedly and use visual resources which illustrate pronunciation. It is possible

to organize sessions with a student individually or small groups of students with a focus on certain phonological aspects in spoken production.

Method

The research was conducted at the Faculty of Information Technology, Džemal Bijedić University in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina with first, second- and third-year students. A total of 624 students responded to the survey. Both students studying in the distance education system and students following classes in the traditional way responded.

In this paper, a method of structural-functional analysis was used, based on which the structure and characteristics of the electronic education system and the principles of teaching a foreign language within this system were presented. By means of the method of comparative analysis, this form of teaching is compared with the classical approach to teaching a foreign language. Students' attitudes and attitudes towards teaching a foreign language in the e-education system were collected in the survey. The MS Excel software tool was utilized in the analysis of the research results. The following statistical methods were applied: data acquisition and primary processing, data sorting, tabulation, data visualization, Cronbach Alpha and Hi-square test.

Data collection and primary processing

The data collected was transferred into a worksheet. The worksheet comprised a total of 624 rows for 624 subjects, whose answers were noted in the corresponding columns. Incomplete data was not treated. For numerical characteristics such as the number of years of studying English, the mean, standard deviation, and coefficient of variation were calculated.

The data was sorted in accordance with the question reflected. Qualitative data was sorted in such a way that for each value of the trait was determined by how many respondents had the related value. For the quantitative type data, mean, standard deviation, and coefficient of variation were calculated. The mean showed the middle of the set, and the coefficient of variation describes how much the data in the set varies and since it is a relative measure, the coefficients of variation for two different variables can be meaningfully compared. Standard variation is a linear measure of the deviation of elements in a set from the mean.

The response structure is expressed in percentages such that the percentage represents the proportion of the number of students who answered a given question in a particular way in the total number of answers to that question.

Tabulation

Contingency tables were created demonstrating frequency of response to questions for students studying in distance learning systems and students studying in the classical way.

Data visualization

Sorted or tabulated data was presented with adequate diagrams, e.g. gender structure is shown in a pie chart showing the proportion of men and women in the total number of respondents, certain frequency distributions are shown in a line diagram, and the differences between the two types of responses are shown by a radar diagram.

Cronbach Alpha

To determine whether the interdependencies of categorical variables can be tested, Cronbach Alpha was calculated as a standard measure of the homogeneity of a set of categorical answers to questions. After it was established that tests for all categorical variables could not be performed, this test was employed for specific groups of questions.

Chi-squared test

The Chi-squared test for contingency tables tested whether there was a relationship between the answer to a particular question and the status of the student (whether the student is studying within the distance education system or in a classical way).

The chi-square test was generated subsequent to tabulating and determining the Cronbach Alpha value, and it tested our hypothesis i.e. whether the methods used in teaching a foreign language in the e-learning system could be as effective as the methods utilized in the classical approach foreign language teaching, as well as the secondary hypothesis that the use of modern information and communication technologies in the process of teaching a foreign language in the electronic education system can compensate for the lack of direct contact between the lecturer and the student, characteristic of the classical approach to teaching.

Results

A total of 624 students responded to the survey. Regarding the gender structure of the respondents, 504 were men, 63 were women, and 57 did not answer the question about gender.

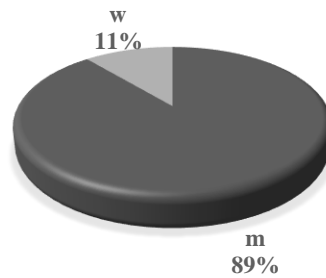


Figure 1.- Gender structure

Students were between 18 and 53 years old, with a median of 20, a mean of 21.1, a standard deviation of 3.26, and a coefficient of variation of 0.155. As the coefficient of variation is small, it is evident that most students are homogeneous between the age of 18 and 23, with an exceedingly small number of extreme values (53 years).

The study involved 378 distance learning (DL) students and 243 In-Class (IC) students, and 3 students did not respond to this question.

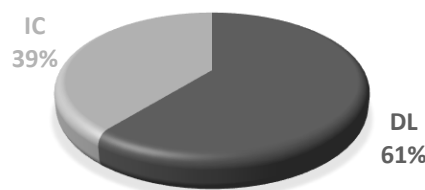


Figure 2.- Structure of respondents according to the type of study

Out of the total number of respondents, 343 identified that the type of study was their primary choice, 103 specified that the type of study was not their primary choice, and 103 did not respond to this question.

Out of the total number of respondents, the majority were second year students since the median is 2.

When asked about the number of years of previous English language learning, the answers ranged from 0 to 12; the median was 9, the mean was 8.84, the standard deviation was 2.90, and the coefficient of variation was 0.328.

To determine the homogeneity of the response set, a Cronbach Alpha of 0.906 was calculated. It means that the data are homogeneous, and further analysis based on the answers to these questions can be considered exceptionally reliable.

To reach conclusions related to our hypothesis on differences in the acquisition of the English language material between distance learning and in-class students, the Chi-square test for contingency tables was performed (Petz, Kolesarić, Ivanec, Milas, Podlesek & Galić, 2012).

Five questions were designed to test the hypothesis for this research. The basic hypothesis of this research is that the methods used in the teaching of a foreign language in the distance education system can be as effective as the methods applied within the classical teaching approach. It is additionally assumed that the use of modern information and communication technologies in the process of teaching a foreign language in the distance education system can compensate for the lack of direct contact between the lecturer and the student.

Question 1. I improved my communicative skills in my English classes: Extremely, Very, Moderately, Slightly, Not at all.

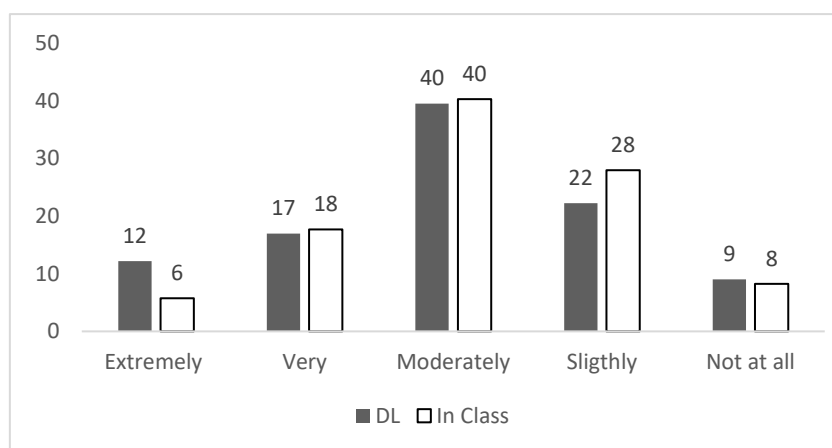


Figure 3.- Percentage Frequency Distribution of Answers to the Question on Improving Communicative Skills for DL and In Class Students

Figure 3 indicates the frequencies of responses to the question 1, expressed in percentages, for DL, and in-class students respectively. The figure demonstrates that the two distributions differ slightly in the way that 6% more DL students stated that they have improved the communicative skills extremely, and 6% more in-class students stated that they improved their communicative skills slightly. Chi-square test was also performed with a p-value of 0.0759.

Therefore, on the basis of the Chi-square test, it can be claimed that the answers on the improvement of communicative skills do not reflect a statistically significant difference.

As the responses of distance learning and in-class students to question 1 do not designate a statistically significant difference, this directly confirms the basic hypothesis of the research that the methods used in the teaching of a foreign language in the distance education system can be as effective as the methods applied within the classical teaching approach and implicitly confirms the secondary hypothesis of the research that the use of modern information and communication technologies in the process of teaching a foreign language in the distance education system can compensate for the lack of direct contact between the lecturer and the student.

Question 2. I improved my listening skills in my English classes: Extremely, Very, Moderately, Slightly, Not at all.

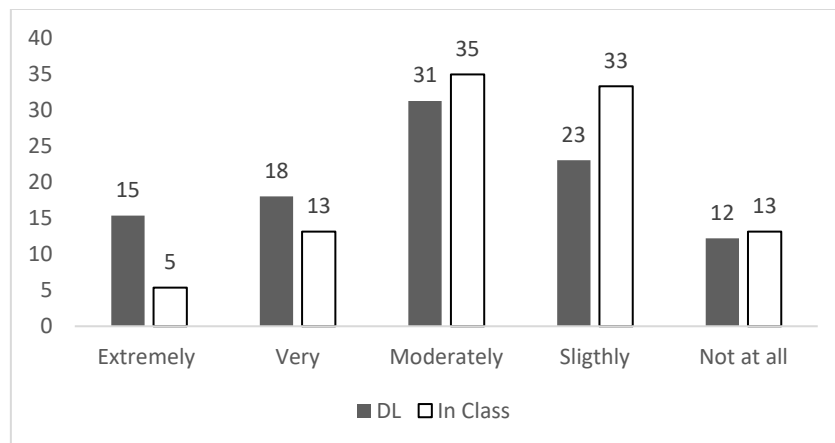


Figure 4- Percentage Frequency Distribution of Answers to the Question on Improving Listening Skills for DL and In Class Students

Figure 4 signifies the frequencies of answers to the question 2, expressed in percentages, for DL, and in-class students, respectively. It is noticeable that DL students rated their view of improving listening skills more positively than in-class students. 10% more DL students specified they improved their listening skills extremely, 5% more that they improved very, while 4%, 10% and 1% less, respectively, denoted they improved their listening skills moderately, slightly and not at all. A Chi-square test was also performed with a p-value of 0.0002, which means that DL and in-class students' responses to question 2 were statistically significantly different, with a significance threshold of 0.01.

As distance learning students reflected a more positive attitude towards the improvement of listening skills than in-class students, this directly confirms the basic hypothesis of the research that the methods employed in the teaching of a foreign language in

the distance education system can be as effective as the methods applied within the classical teaching approach. and implicitly confirms the secondary hypothesis of the research that the use of modern information and communication technologies in the process of teaching a foreign language in the distance education system can compensate for the lack of direct contact between the lecturer and the student

Question3. I improved my writing skills in my English classes: Extremely, Very, Moderately, Slightly, Not at all.

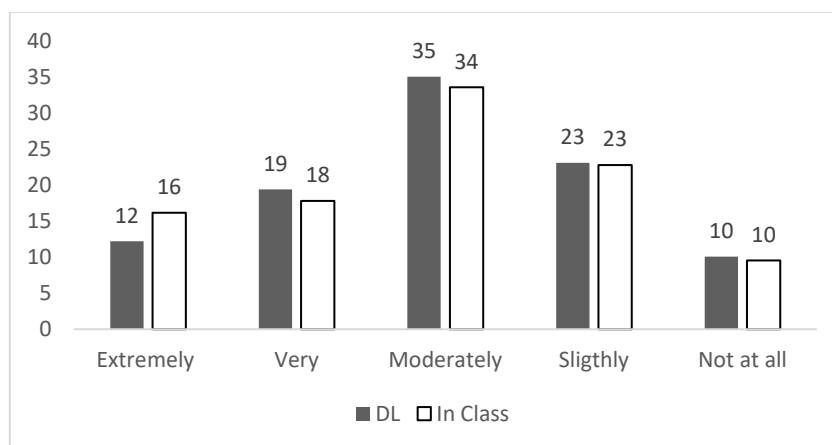


Figure 5- Percentage Frequency Distribution of Answers to the Question on Improving Writing Skills for DL and In Class Students

Figure 5 indicates the frequencies of responses to the question 3, demonstrated in percentages, for DL, and in-class students, respectively. The figure designates that the two distributions differ slightly in that 4% fewer DL students stated that they improved their writing skills extremely, while the other response modalities differ by 1% or do not differ. A Chi-square test was also performed with a p-value of 0.7346. Thus, on the basis of the Chi-square test, it can be claimed that the answers on the improvement of writing skills do not show a statistically significant difference.

As the responses of distance learning and in-class students to question 3 do not show statistically significant difference, this directly confirms the basic hypothesis of the research that the methods used in the teaching of a foreign language in the distance education system can be as effective as the methods applied within the classical teaching approach and implicitly confirms the secondary hypothesis of the research that the use of modern information and communication technologies in the process of teaching a foreign language in the distance education system can compensate for the lack of direct contact between the lecturer and the student.

Question 4. I improved my reading skills in my English classes: Extremely, Very, Moderately, Slightly, Not at all.

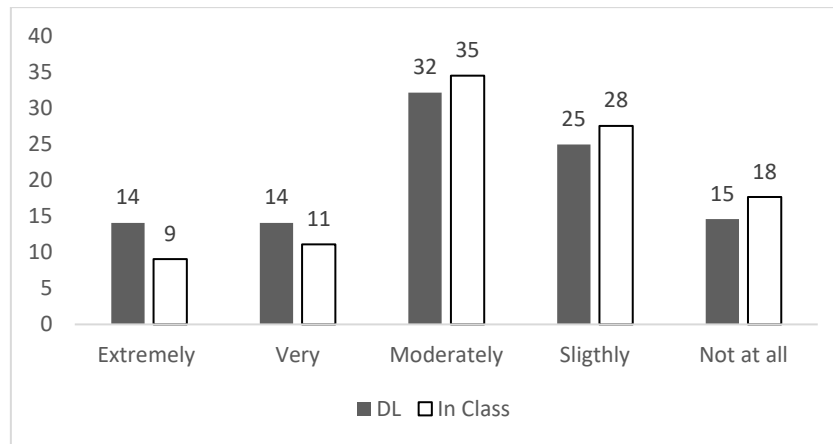


Figure 6- Percentage Frequency Distribution of Answers to the Question on Improving Reading Skills for DL and In Class Students

Figure 6 signifies the frequencies of responses to the question 4, identified in percentages, for DL, and in-class students, respectively. The figure shows that the two distributions differ slightly for 5% and 3%, respectively. More distance learning students stated that they improved extremely or very their reading skills, and by 3% less that they improved their reading skills moderately, slightly or not at all. A Chi-square test was also performed with a p-value of 0.2289. Thus, on the basis of the Chi-square test, it can be claimed that the answers on the improvement of reading skills do not show statistically significant difference.

As the answers of distance learning and in-class students to question 4 do not show statistically significant difference, this directly confirms the basic hypothesis of the research that the methods used in the teaching of a foreign language in the distance education system can be as effective as the methods applied within the classical teaching approach and implicitly confirms the secondary hypothesis of the research that the use of modern information and communication technologies in the process of teaching a foreign language in the distance education system can compensate for the lack of direct contact between the lecturer and the student.

Question 5. I improved my knowledge of grammar in my English classes: Extremely, Very, Moderately, Slightly, Not at all.

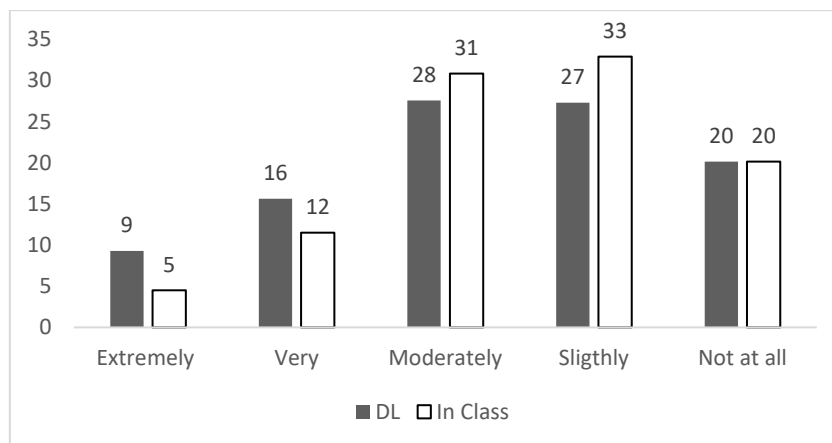


Figure 7- Percentage Frequency Distribution of Answers to the Question on Improving Knowledge of Grammar for DL and In Class Students

Figure 7 shows the frequencies of responses to question 5, specified in percentages, for distance learning, and in-class students, respectively. The graph shows that the two distributions differ slightly in the way that 4% more DL students stated that they had improved their knowledge of grammar extremely or very, while in-class students by 3% stated that they improved their knowledge of grammar moderately and 6% more that they improved a slightly. A Chi-square test was also performed with p-value of 0.0773 Thus, on the basis of the Chi-square test, it can be concluded that the answers to the question on the improvement of knowledge of grammar do not indicate a statistically significant difference.

As the responses of distance learning and in-class students to question 5 do not reflect a statistically significant difference, this directly confirms the basic hypothesis of the research that the methods employed in the teaching of a foreign language in the distance education system can be as effective as the methods applied within the classical teaching approach and implicitly confirms the secondary hypothesis of the research that the use of modern information and communication technologies in the process of teaching a foreign language in the distance education system can compensate for the lack of direct contact between the lecturer and the student.

Conclusion

Although the results of the research confirmed the hypothesis that the methods used in the teaching of a foreign language in the distance education system can be as effective as the methods applied within the classical teaching approach, there is always an opportunity for improvement. Both distance learning, and in-class students almost equally expressed their opinion that they believe they improved reading, writing, listening, communication, as well as

their knowledge of grammar in their English language courses. These results should not be completely depended on, as it is partly subjective assessment of the students' progress in the English language learning process. It should be also considered that students have distinct levels of English proficiency and different previous learning experiences. Students were initially highly motivated to study English as English proficiency is extremely important for their future profession in information and communication sector. However, support from teachers, progress evaluation careful guidance in the learning process are very crucial and must be carefully planned and implemented.

Corresponding to planning language skills development activities in the distance learning system, special attention must be paid to developing communicative skills, given the specific nature of this form of education due to the lack of face-to-face contact between teachers and students. Owing to the continuous development of information and communication technologies, various opportunities are provided which can adequately address the problem of lack of direct contact. In addition to the online lectures and seminars, which provide students with the opportunity to develop communicative skills to a certain extent, it is also possible to organize various audio or audio / video sessions through which students can orally present their work or assignments and participate in discussions on a particular topic. The role of teachers in such activities is very noteworthy, as it is necessary to adequately moderate and direct communication, as well as to motivate students to participate in such communicative activities. In the further development of the distance learning system, it is necessary to keep up with advances in information and communication technologies, but also to pay special attention to the pedagogical aspects and teaching methods in order to use the advantages and opportunities offered by modern technologies in an adequate way that will result in the development of skills required in today's society.

It can be concluded that in the distance learning system it is important to create appropriate predispositions to achieve the goal that is considered to be the greatest advantage of this type of teaching, i.e. developing skills for independent work and research and lifelong learning. In doing so, it is significant to take into account all advantages and disadvantages of distance learning systems, especially the absence of direct, face-to-face contact between participants throughout the teaching process. Carefully designed English language teaching materials, accompanied by appropriate and carefully planned forms and dynamics of interaction between participants in the distance learning system, as well as activities aimed at maintaining the necessary degree of students' motivation, exist as key elements which determine the degree of success and learning outcomes of the distance education learning process.

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Available online at:
<https://dergipark.org.tr/eltri/>
*International Association of Research
in Foreign Language Education and
Applied Linguistics*
ELT Research Journal
2020, 9(1), 28-53
ISSN: 2146-9814

School-Based and Faculty-Based Teaching Practices: Student Teachers Gain Classroom Experiences

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Received: 2020-05-27 Accepted: 2020-06-22

Abstract

Teaching experiences in school-based contexts considerably contribute to student teachers' teaching performance throughout their pre-service education process. An additional attempt to increase teaching competency is incorporating microteaching practices into pre-service education. Therefore, this study aims to investigate how awareness level of student teachers of English for the teaching profession is increased in terms of both microteaching and school-based experiences. The participants of the study were the fourth-year student teachers studying at the English Language Teaching Department (ELT) at a Turkish university. The study is a descriptive and longitudinal one in nature. Both qualitative and quantitative research tools were used for data collection. The overall results of the study revealed that school-based experience fostered professional consciousness and teaching practice development. The comparative results of the study demonstrated that schools are more ideal learning communities than microteaching sessions for student teachers to be professionally matured. On the other hand, microteaching practices were also proclaimed to be priming and supportive teaching experiences.

Key Words: school-based experience, teacher learning, microteaching, student teacher

Introduction

Teachers' learning process is normally initiated in faculty-based contexts and is strengthened in school-based contexts. In faculty-based contexts or throughout the pre-service education process, student teachers are predominantly exposed to field knowledge of which focal point is on the theory of teaching profession. Teacher learning is not viewed as translating knowledge and theories into practice but rather as constructing new knowledge and theory through participating in specific social contexts and engaging in particular types of activities and processes (Burns & Richards, 2009). Accordingly, there is a strong link

between teacher learning in faculty-based contexts and enhanced teaching practice in school-based contexts. In other words, teachers' expertise can be possessed through individual skills and knowledge development during teaching profession implemented in the classroom events of school-based contexts, though there are as yet no established common criteria for identifying expert teachers (Tsui, 2009). In other words, teacher quality cannot be apprehended with any standardized list (Korthagen, 2017).

Professional learning policies and practices can be appraised as the key components which lead to alterations in teachers' learning outcomes and professional learning experiences. In this respect, the teacher has the responsibility of theorization of practice through collaboration in social settings so as to gain professional consciousness, knowledge, and development (Johnston, 2009; Korthagen, 2017). Concerning English language teacher education, the embedded values and attitudes in teacher education programs impose the theoretical knowledge on student teachers for professional diploma, and those imposed notions are negotiated and conceptualized in school-based contexts where they professionalize as teachers (Borg, 2003). The demand for competent teachers of English necessitates supplementary approaches for their education and professional development. In English language teacher education, the support is commonly provided for content knowledge, linguistic knowledge, and pedagogical knowledge. In content knowledge, student teachers are taught theoretical field notes, in linguistic knowledge they are exposed to language skills development, and in pedagogical knowledge they learn how to teach. In field courses, they are exposed to microteaching practices before they graduate from the faculty. In the final year of education, they experience various pedagogical practices in school-based contexts which contribute to teacher learning opportunities.

Microteaching practices and teacher training

Microteaching is a professional training activity offered by teacher training programs with the aim of providing student teachers with opportunities to practice teaching through observation and reflection on their own and others' teaching styles. Microteaching is used to expand the scope of student teachers while mastering various teaching skills and teaching experiences. Alternatively, it orients them to gain teaching experiences for natural classroom environments (Amobi & Irwin, 2009; Richards & Farrell 2011). In accordance with this, it is the integral component of teacher education and professional learning.

Microteaching could be defined as the micro lesson of a student teacher which is videotaped and evaluated by both lecturers and classmates through the feedback on the

student teacher's teaching style and performance, material development, and repertoire improvement. The feedback session is a regular practice in terms of encouraging the development of self-analysis and reflective practice (Kponja, 2001; Legutke & Ditfurth, 2009; Kourieos, 2016). The quality of reflection boosts student teachers' competent teaching experiences and leads to professional growth. Since a micro lesson offers opportunities to student teachers to be involved in teaching practices, they are prepared for what/how/where/whom to teach.

A microteaching lesson is initiated by preparing lesson plans comprising activities in conformity with the lesson cycle. In this respect, primarily the success of a micro lesson is directly related to lesson planning with comprehensible objectives in a planned sequence. Whilst implementing classroom activities, student teachers are observed by lecturers and classmates. In the next stage, evaluation and reflection on teaching practice that are the contributing factors of the cycle are reported. In the re-teaching stage, student teachers re-teach the lesson by considering the proposed suggestions in the evaluation and reflection stage in which they have been expected to employ a variety of coping tactics (Richards & Farrell 2011). As has been noted, microteaching activities can be identified as professional experiences prompting efficiency on preparing and applying lesson plans by gathering data from target students' capabilities, learning capacities, needs, and expectations. Several studies have suggested that microteaching encompasses practical experiences for meeting the desired objectives of training teachers to become effective and reflective in their teaching profession (Benton-Kupper, 2001; Amobi, 2005; Eick et al., 2005; Akalın, 2005; Luk, 2008; Rich & Hannafin, 2009; Britton & Anderson, 2010; Tavit, 2012; Majoni, 2017). Some studies have concluded that microteaching activities assist student teachers to overwhelm their anxiety levels, defeat hesitation and fear, increase professional commitment, raise consciousness about teaching profession, become efficient in all topics related to teaching proficiency, learn how to interact with students, become experienced in testing and evaluating, become competent in directing student's attention into the class, manage and use their time conveniently, utilize educational technologies, and perform efficient classroom management (Karamustafaoğlu & Akdeniz, 2002; Arends, 2005; Mergler & Tangen, 2010; Majoni, 2017).

Even though microteaching can be assumed as an avail tool in teacher training programs, student teachers may not display the expected efficiency due to various reasons. Possible reasons such as artificial classroom environments, material production procedures, time-limit in course schedules, and maintenance of equipment regarding reduced budgets of student teachers (Cripwell & Geddes, 1982; Stanley, 1998; Lederman & Gess-Newsome,

1991; He & Yan, 2011) and increased anxiety levels of student teachers (Donnelly & Fitzmaurice, 2011; Lumpe et al., 2012) have been argued in various studies. With regard to the advantages and disadvantages of microteaching, it can be noted that microteaching can contribute to professional learning to some extent during teacher education process. Similarly, numerous supportive teacher learning activities also occur in school-based contexts through interaction, discussion, collaboration, reflection, and mentoring with the others who teach within the same discipline so as to enable novice teachers to cope with teaching matters.

School-based contexts and teacher learning

School-based contexts engage colleagues in working collaboratively while planning teaching activities such as designing a syllabus, a course, and an activity; planning and assigning tasks; developing course materials and practicing them; making assessment and evaluation, and so forth (Caires & Almeida, 2005; Grudnoff, Haigh, & Mackisack, 2017). Therefore, school-based practices are initiated in teacher training education as the cooperation between faculties and schools with the aim of leading professional learning. In teacher training programs, this cooperation is employed within school experience courses. Since school practicum courses are constructive for gaining experiences concerning many aspects of the teaching profession (Ekşi et al., 2019), those courses are considered to be the most essential ones in initial teacher education (Tang, 2003).

School-based contexts may offer several conducive opportunities to student teachers. In teacher education process, student teachers are exposed to theoretical knowledge about teaching matters; however, experience gained through practicum enables student teachers to expand awareness of how to set their own goals related to their own teaching (Halbach, 2000; Crookes, 2003). In school contexts, mentoring is offered to student teachers in order to establish a formal relationship by a competent and experienced teacher and to make suggestions and give feedback (Malderez, 2009). In this perspective, school-based contexts engage their staff -either experienced or novice- in professional discourse and encourage them to reflect on what and how they are attempting to accomplish with students.

The studies on the expectations and attitudes of student teachers have implied that student teachers develop broad, well-structured practical theories that focus on pupils' learning processes, and their learning processes display considerable individual variation

(Buitink, 2009; Stanulis & Floden, 2009; Khairani, 2011). Similarly, some studies have identified several key features of mentoring that are assumed to be improving teacher confidence, knowledge, and instruction; raising student achievement; and increasing retention (Stanulis, Little & Wibbens, 2012; Kapadia & Coca, 2007; Ekşi et al., 2019). In this sense, school experience offers numerous occasions for the improvement of a significant scope of knowledge and reflective skills for student teachers.

Although school practicum is acknowledged as a bridge between theoretical knowledge and teaching practice to update student teachers' teaching knowledge and skills, to lead professional learning, to achieve agreed goals and expectations, and to guide a convenient understanding of teaching practices through the cooperation between the faculty and school experiences, some studies outlined a quantity of lacking aspects of school experience in terms of the roles of supervisor, mentors, school administration, weekly activities, and etc. (Demirkol, 2004; Güven, 2004; Caires & Almeida, 2005; Aksu & Demirtaş, 2006; Gömleksiz et al, 2006; Aydın, Selçuk & Yeşilyurt, 2007; Özmen, 2008). By all means, it is not sufficient for student teachers merely to have the skills of reflection but they must additionally be able to convey their pedagogical knowledge into practice and transfer that knowledge to others by devoting time to think about the types of knowledge and skills (Mergler & Spooner-Lane, 2012). Thus, student teachers can access to specialized knowledge through learning from each other and evaluating the impact of classroom practices.

In Turkey, school-based experience is initiated in the final year of teacher education programs at faculties of education. Each week for four-six hours, student teachers have to attend the schools actively which have a contract with the faculties of education. At the end of the semester, they are assessed by both mentors and supervisors. The criteria for the assessment of each student teacher are related to the objectives of the course that are principally based on the experience of teaching capability as an associate member of the staff in the school setting. The chief concern in assessment is to evaluate student teachers' professional performance and to scrutinize whether they would gain the requirements and details of teaching profession.

Methodology

The study aims to explore how effective microteaching practices in teacher education programs are, what impacts those practices have on student teachers' teaching performance,

and whether the gains from school-based experiences are more efficient than the experiences from microteaching practices. The study also aims to investigate the efficiency of some applications used to encourage student teachers through feedback, reports, seminars, weekly plans, and observation. Based on the above-mentioned objectives, the following research questions and sub-questions were designed and answers were sought to the questions:

1. What are the differences of teacher learning in microteaching and school-based practices?
2. What policies are promoted during microteaching practices and school-based teacher learning in terms of:
 - a. the nature of professional knowledge
 - b. professional development
 - c. the nature of professional consciousness
 - d. problem solving in teaching process
 - e. understanding and integrating in the teaching profession

The study is longitudinal and descriptive in nature. The research was implemented through surveys and observations. It was assumed that to examine a group of student teachers in a profound and longitudinal way would provide a systematic way of considering the teaching events which were employed in both faculty-based and school-based contexts.

Two years' time was spent on the planning process of the study. In the first year, the participants were exposed to compulsory microteaching activities as designed in the curriculum of ELT programs at the faculty of education. In the second year of the research process, they were exposed to school practicum applications during which they had to implement the activities in the school experience guide prepared for the faculties of education under the supervising of the mentors in the school environment and the supervisors in the faculty. Each week, the participants' reports on the activities were evaluated, and they were given feedback on their experiences by the supervisors.

Participants

The participants of the study were 122 fourth year student teachers attending the English Language Teaching Department (ELT) at a Turkish university. All participants were expected to complete the consent process through which they allowed their work to be published. The study was carried out for two years. During the first year of the study, all student teachers (122) participated in the study and were observed in the microteaching sessions by the researcher while they were attending the third year of education. In the second

year of the research process, the school experience of those participants was investigated; however, 96 participants became volunteer to participate in the study and reflect on their teaching experiences in the schools.

Data collection and analysis

Both qualitative and quantitative analyses were used to evaluate the data collected through questionnaires and interview reports. The questionnaires were evaluated through quantitative analysis, and the statistical program SPSS 20 was utilized to compute the data. The classroom observation reports and interviews were evaluated through qualitative methods.

With a view to collecting data to explore the benefits of microteaching and school practicum practices, two questionnaires were designed by the researcher. Prior to data collection, to test the reliability of the instruments, a pilot study was conducted, and Cronbach Alpha Coefficient of the microteaching questionnaire was obtained as .84 and for school experience .92.

Findings and results

Microteaching Evaluation

At the end of the first-year research process, the student teachers' views about microteaching were explored through 20-item microteaching questionnaire and the responses are displayed in Table1.

Table 1. *Evaluation of microteaching sessions*

Items	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree	\bar{x}	SD
1. Microteaching process was motivating for my teaching profession	36.8	47.4	14.0	1.8	-	4.36	0.67
2. Microteaching activities helped me to design my lesson plan	5.3	49.1	43.9	1.8	-	3.54	0.95
3. I comprehended teaching methods and techniques better in microteaching process	-	10.5	38.6	50.9	-	1.70	1.18
4. I practiced how to develop efficient materials in microteaching process	7.0	60.9	26.8	5.3	-	4.07	0.69
5. Microteaching activities prompted my teaching performance	33.3	47.4	19.3	-	-	4.35	0.65
6. Observing my classmates' microteaching sessions contributed to my teaching proficiency	-	57.9	14.0	21.1	7.0	3.67	0.92
7. Microteaching helped me to spend teaching time efficiently	5.3	15.7	21.6	41.6	15.8	2.20	1.10
8. Microteaching activities were not productive because of artificial classroom environments	29.1	52.5	9.8	17.5	-	4.43	0.59
9. Through feedback by my lecturers, I learnt a lot about teaching proficiency	8.8	32.1	27.5	31.6	-	3.13	1.14

10. I got the chance of congregating various teaching models in microteaching sessions	26.3	50.9	12.3	10.5	-	4.32	0.64
11. It was beneficial for my future occupation to see course designs in different linguistic and age levels through microteaching activities.	-	52.6	40.4	1.8	5.3	3.54	0.94
12. Microteaching was favorable for my future occupation.	21.1	32.1	26.3	20.5	-	3.40	1.21
13. Giving feedback to my classmates during microteaching activities contributed to my teaching performance	1.9	11.1	12.3	30.4	44.3	1.62	1.15
14. During microteaching sessions I could teach freely as a teacher.	-	8.8	-	73.7	17.5	1.86	1.21
15. I could apply classroom management in microteaching sessions appropriately since the participants were my classmates	-	5.3	12.3	26.3	56.1	1.85	1.22
16. Classroom assessment were efficiently implemented in microteaching sessions	-	7.0	10.4	67.3	15.3	1.88	1.16
17. During microteaching process, I was informed about school policies	-	18.4	-	45.0	36.6	1.90	1.24
18. Microteaching activities gave the opportunity of participating in faculty projects	-	1.8	3.8	32.6	61.8	1.32	1.29
19. Microteaching forced me to use the classroom as a lab	1.7	3.2	27.4	67.7	-	1.87	1.16
20. I was taught how to obey professional behavior	7.4	20.6	19.0	45.4	7.6	2.10	1.09

When the responses were examined, it was noticed that they had both positive and negative attitudes toward microteaching practices. In positive sense, they admitted that microteaching which increased their motivation level for teaching profession (item 1) was a kind of helping tool for getting the opportunity to design course plans and develop course materials (item 2 and item 4 respectively). In addition, microteaching practices were evaluated as occasions which prompted teaching performance (items 5 and 12) and led to professional growth from others' teaching experiences (item 6). Regarding the responses of the participants in this context, it is possible to state that by observing others' teaching styles and strategies and by discussing common subjects of teaching and learning, microteaching applications gave participants the opportunity to practice in a supportive surrounding. In this respect, they acknowledged that through microteaching sessions they got the opportunity to practice teaching in the light of the lecturer's feedback (item 9) and congregating various teaching models for the learners at different age and linguistic levels (items 10 and 11). However, in some respects, microteaching training was not recognized to be as productive as assumed due to the artificial classroom environment (item 8). Furthermore, since the learner groups in those artificial environments were their classmates, they could not give feedback effectively (item 13), pertain efficient classroom management (item 15), and assess the

success or failure of the learners in a natural way (item 16). The other negative responses were focused on the notion of the time spent during microteaching (items 7 and 14); they mostly admitted that the microteaching time was not consistent with a real classroom teaching time, therefore they could not feel themselves efficient and free enough while teaching in microteaching sessions. Similar to this, they stated they could not comprehend the distinctive features of teaching methods and techniques in a better way during microteaching applications (item 3). Additionally, they declared that information about school policies was not given during microteaching (item 17); they did not get the opportunity to participate at any project performed at the faculty (item 18), and they could not be successful at using the classes as lab (item 19); therefore, they were not trained satisfactorily in obeying professional behavior (item 20).

The items in the microteaching questionnaire were classified in five categories and discerned as a) items 2, 3, 5, 11 imply the nature of professional knowledge; b) items 4, 6, 7, 9 refer to the nature of professional development; c) items 1, 8, 12, 13 denote professional consciousness; d) items 10, 14, 15, 16 are about problem-solving; e) items 17, 18, 19, 20 pertain to the notions of understanding and integrating. Each category is represented through five themes: a) professional self-development; b) sharing others' experiences; c) developing educational aims; d) enhancing skills development; e) focusing on learners. While categorizing the data, each category was primarily described clearly, the categories were then designed in a consistent and logical relationship, and finally the conceptions in the categories were identified and analyzed. The categories were re-checked a few times periodically and the original data were re-visited to confirm the results and to set aside the individual perspective of the researcher. The researcher expected another colleague to read the original data and reflect on the categories. The colleague confirmed the analysis of the researcher.

The responses were reevaluated with the mean scores of each category to check how effective the categories are and displayed in Table 2.

Table 2. *The mean scores of the categories of microteaching*

	<i>the nature of professional knowledge</i>	<i>the nature of professional development</i>	<i>the nature of professional consciousness</i>	<i>the nature of problem-solving</i>	<i>understanding and integrating</i>
\bar{x}	3.28	3.26	3.45	2.48	1.79
ss	0.90	0.96	0.91	1.05	1.19

The mean scores and standard deviations of each category in the microteaching questionnaire were calculated and displayed in Table 2. As indicated in the table, the participants' professional consciousness was found out to be the most effective category ($\bar{x} = 3.45$). This category is relatively followed by professional knowledge ($\bar{x} = 3.28$), professional development ($\bar{x} = 3.26$). Those three categories received comparable means; however problem solving ($\bar{x} = 2.48$) and understanding/integrating categories ($\bar{x} = 1.79$) were found out (discovered) to be less affective in terms of gaining professional experiences in microteaching practices.

Interview reports

The reliability of the participants' responses to microteaching was also checked through semi-structured interviews. Below given some sample statements:

1. Microteaching for developing professional knowledge

"Microteaching practices helped me specify appropriate teaching goals..."

"Designing lesson plans for microteaching sessions promoted my ability for choosing appropriate activities and materials..."

"I felt myself well-prepared after preparing lesson plans..."

"Microteaching was not so supportive for me to modify the teaching methods and techniques when necessary..."

"Microteaching was a way of getting an occasion to find opportunities to design course plans for learners at different age, linguistic levels..."

2. Microteaching for professional development

"I experienced how to produce teaching materials for microteaching activities..."

"I think the most important contribution of microteaching was to gain insights from others' teaching experiences...while giving feedback to my classmates after the microteaching session, I acquired professional expertise..."

"I had difficulties while teaching because of limited time..."

"...the more I applied microteaching sessions in the course, the more, I believe, I learnt..."

3. The impact of microteaching on the nature of professional consciousness

"...we mostly faced some troubles, but through microteaching we created some opportunities to reflect our ideas..."

"...teaching practices were difficult but motivating..."

"...I didn't feel myself as teacher..."

“I had difficulty in incorporating real life classroom settings with the artificial ones...

“Preparing teaching aids is too expensive and time consuming...”

4. *Microteaching is a practical way of problem solving*

“Microteaching provided a space for me to bring together others’ teaching models...”

“Since microteaching practices were performed with our own classmates, I knew that the students were not real students. They were just my friends...”

“I did not feel myself so comfortable while assessing and giving feedback...”

“The criticisms made by my classmates seemed threatening therefore microteaching sessions were a demoralizing experience to me...”

5. *Understanding and integrating through microteaching*

“Microteaching was not available for learning about school policies...”

“Microlessons were the directive practices for improving yourself through other models...but I could not use the class to practice a lot...to learn a lot...”

“Microteaching didn’t contribute to understanding professional behavior...”

“... the opportunity of discussing and sharing the experience of others was good for us...but we didn’t share any experiences about the projects...”

As seen above, similar ideas were declared in the interview sessions by the participants. The views of the participants were categorized and narrated in Table 3 with the corresponding themes:

Table 3. *Categories of the student teachers’ views about microteaching and the corresponding themes*

Categories	Themes				
	1	2	3	4	5
	<i>professionally self-development</i>	<i>sharing others’ experiences</i>	<i>developing educational aims</i>	<i>enhancing skills development</i>	<i>focusing on learners</i>
<i>the nature of professional knowledge</i>	Specialized knowledge for planning lessons	Knowledge in teaching performance	in Having difficulties while adjusting teaching methods and techniques	Skill-based knowledge in language use	Improving the ability of teaching to learners at different age and linguistic levels
<i>professional consciousness</i>	Gaining artificial professional consciousness	Appreciating the shared experience of practice with others.	Deciding on the appropriateness of teaching materials	Discovering good or bad language teaching behaviors	Promoting the knowledge of spending teaching time

<i>the nature of professional development</i>	Building confidence through motivating factor of microteaching	self- the techniques	Evaluating others' teaching techniques	Developing experiential knowledge in a controlled way	Recognizing new skills while learning about teaching	Due to artificial classroom settings, not being able to give feedback
<i>problem-solving</i>	Reflecting on professional competence and performance	on and through feedback by lecturers	Deciding on better ways of teaching through the feedback by lecturers	Not being able to modify the procedures freely due to limited teaching time	Getting opportunities for congregating various teaching models	Menacing and demoralizing experience on classroom management
<i>understanding and integrating</i>	Lack of bridging the gap between professional and personal behavior	bridging professional and personal behavior	Not being able to participate in faculty projects	Not being able to promote the ability of using the class as lab	Scarcity of observational and analytical skills about school policies	Having difficulty in incorporating real life classroom settings with the simulating ones

In the second year of the research process, subsequent to the completion of the school experience process, the student teachers' attitudes were additionally evaluated through a 30-item questionnaire. The items were designed to investigate the activities they reported weekly in order to check the validity of the reports on the whole. The responses and mean scores are displayed in Table 4.

Table 4. *Evaluation of school-based teaching experiences*

Items	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree	\bar{x}	SD
Schools are beneficial for							
1. Fulfilling the proposed activities of the plan prepared for the school experience course	17.5	52.5	10.2	16.3	3.5	4.28	0.98
2. Taking guidance from school mentors in the proposed periods	33.0	41.5	19.2	6.3	-	4.30	0.77
3. Taking suggestions from school mentors on the principles of teaching in a classroom	27.5	55.0	12.2	5.3	-	4.28	0.98
4. Taking suggestions from school mentors on classroom management	41.2	41.2	12.3	4.0	1.3	4.35	0.66
5. Dealing with classroom assessment	26.2	36.5	22.3	15.0	-	3.84	1.06
6. Giving feedback to students in real classroom context	40.4	52.6	5.3	1.8	-	4.38	0.65
7. Obeying professional behavior	15.8	61.6	15.8	5.6	1.2	4.07	0.73
8. Attending school as determined in regular schedule	56.1	43.9	-	-	-	4.83	0.49

9. Applying the required school experience activities	64.7	32.3	3.0	-	-	4.47	0.72
10. Giving instructions and explanations in real classroom environment	40.4	52.6	5.3	1.7	-	4.77	0.54
11. Evaluating course books and materials	7.0	60.9	26.8	5.3	-	3.99	0.93
12. Developing drills for the needs and expectations of the students at different age levels and linguistic levels	20.4	72.6	5.2	1.8	-	4.71	0.51
13. Group work observation	10.3	42.6	25.3	21.8	-	3.54	0.85
14. Developing course materials	35.4	57.6	5.4	1.6	-	4.70	0.51
15. Preparing and using worksheets	45.0	55.0	-	-	-	4.85	0.43
16. Evaluating and recording student performances	26.3	44.4	4.0	25.3	-	4.38	0.81
17. Using simulations in education	21.1	30.4	36.3	9.2	3.0	3.61	1.10
18. Evaluation of school management	73.0	25.3	1.7	-	-	4.78	0.56
19. Learning about school policy	26.3	42.9	10.2	11.5	10.0	3.61	1.10
20. Getting feedback from supervisors	50.9	26.3	12.3	10.5	-	4.49	0.59
21. Being exposed to classroom research	16.3	30.9	22.3	30.5	-	3.31	1.15
22. Applying the suggestions of mentors and supervisors	35.1	56.1	8.8	-	-	4.34	0.81
23. Observing experienced teachers' classrooms	82.0	18.0	-	-	-	4.81	0.52
24. Developing appropriate teaching strategies	38.6	43.1	11.3	7.0	-	4.14	0.85
25. Working with colleagues for team planning	23.6	40.7	2.3	23.3	10.1	3.61	1.10
26. Participating in school projects	-	32.5	19.0	31.1	17.4	2.91	1.06
27. Using the school as lab	15.5	52.8	9.8	20.1	1.8	4.23	0.98
28. Reading literature in the field	24.6	46.1	18.0	11.3	-	4.15	0.85
29. Attending the seminars organized by schools	10.3	27.9	45.3	16.5	-	3.01	1.24
30. Developing skill-based knowledge in language use	46.4	44.3	-	9.3	-	4.36	0.67

The items in the school experience questionnaire were classified in five categories and discerned as a) professional knowledge; b) the nature of professional development; c) professional consciousness; d) problem-solving; e) the notions of understanding and integrating.

As the percentage values are displayed in the table above, most of the student teachers agreed on the benefits of school experience. In general sense, their responses confirmed that fulfilling and applying the activities proposed in school experience were predominantly appreciated and evaluated positively by them (items 1 and 9). The outstanding high values belong to the items which can be evaluated in the category of professional knowledge. Among those items, taking guidance and suggestions from school mentors on certain topics which are principles of teaching, classroom management in the proposed periods (items 2,3,4 respectively), getting feedback from supervisors (item 20), and applying them (item 22) are the striking issues in gaining professional knowledge, and those items were valued with high percentage rates by the participants. Items such as 7, 8, 27, and 26 comprise the notion of integrating in the teaching profession. Among those items, obeying professional behavior, attending school as determined in the regular schedule of the schools, and using the school as lab are highly valued by the student teachers for being integrated in the school context. But

participation in school projects (item 26) got the lowest percentage value, the reason may be the scarcity of school projects conducted in the schools the attended. With regard to the responses given for the items related to professional development, it was detected that the student teachers were highly satisfied with school experience. Since they practiced teaching in real classroom environments, classroom assessment (item 5), giving instructions and explanations to students (item 10), evaluating and recording student performances (item 16), observing experienced teachers' classrooms (item 23), and giving feedback to students (6) were perceived as the most beneficial aspects of school experience. On the other hand, of the items belonging to professional development, group work observation (item 13), being exposed to classroom research (item 21), and using simulations in classroom environments (item 17) were not considered as beneficial as the other items, instead those ones were identified with the 'undecided' option.

In the questionnaire some items can be evaluated within the domain of problem-solving category: evaluating course materials (item 11), developing drills and course materials for the needs and expectations of students (items 12 and 14), preparing and using worksheets (item 15), developing appropriate teaching strategies for the target group (item 24), reading relevant literature (item 28), and developing skill-based knowledge (item 30) were appreciated as the extremely favorable activities. Additionally, some items about professional consciousness were also encapsulated the questionnaire: working with colleagues (item 25), learning about school policy (item 19), evaluation of school management (item 18), and attending seminars organized by schools (item 29). Among those items, 18, 19, and 25 were responded positively. But item 29 was scored as the lowest one in positive manner. The reason may be highly likely that the schools they attended did not organize any seminars during their attendance.

Similar to the microteaching evaluation, the mean scores of school experience were evaluated to check how relative effectiveness of the categories and displayed in Table 5. The categories a) the nature of professional knowledge; b) the nature of professional development; c); professional consciousness d) problem-solving; e) understanding and integrating are also represented through five themes: a) professionally self-development; b) sharing others' experiences; c) developing educational aims; d) enhancing skills development; e) focusing on learners. The relevant categories and themes in school experience corresponding to the categories in microteaching questionnaire were categorized in the same manner.

Table 5. *The mean scores of the categories of microteaching*

	<i>the nature of professional knowledge</i>	<i>professional development</i>	<i>the nature of problem-solving professional consciousness</i>	<i>understanding and integrating</i>
\bar{x}	4.37	4.08	3.75	4.41
ss	0.76	0.83	0.99	0.67

In Table 5, the mean score and standard deviations for each item in the school experience questionnaire are displayed. The computed mean scores in the table present the increased effectiveness of school experience when compared to the results of microteaching in Table 2. As seen in the above table, the participants' problem-solving abilities were promoted through school experience activities and was found out to be the most effective category ($\bar{x} = 4.41$). Additionally, professional knowledge ($\bar{x} = 4.37$), professional development ($\bar{x} = 4.08$), and understanding and integrating professional matters ($\bar{x} = 4.02$) were also found out to be highly effective benefits and gains of school experience activities. Of those categories, the least effective one was professional consciousness ($\bar{x} = 3.75$).

Interview reports about school experience

In order to check the responses of the student teachers to school experience, a semi-structured interview was planned. The participants generally agreed on the positive impacts of school experience as displayed in the following sample extracts:

1. School experience for developing professional knowledge

“School experience helped me gain how to practice teaching...”

“It provided me with high standards of professional understanding...”

“It helped me gaining experiences about classroom management...”

“I comprehended knowledge in specifying and evaluating teaching issues...”

“I gained insights about teaching profession through the feedback...”

2. School experience for professionally development

“School experience provided a space for me to evaluate others' teaching techniques...”

“It offered the opportunity of discussing and sharing the experience of teaching...”

“In the classroom, I could evaluate the learning outcomes the students...”

“I think the most important contribution of school experience is to gain insights from experienced teachers...”

“...while giving feedback to my students after, I acquired professional expertise...”

3. The impacts of School experience on the nature of professional consciousness

“School experience practices help me build rapport with the other teaching staff...”

“School experience was the occasion to learn about school policy...”

“School management was one of the novel items for me...I learnt a lot about the management in the school...I think such experience is important for teachers...”

“Teaching to real students helped me how to reflect on my teaching behaviors...”

4. *School experience is a practical way of problem solving*

“School experience is a way of getting an opportunity to find our own ways in teaching profession...”

“I developed self-confidence and became competent enough in teaching issues because I read a lot about teaching matters...”

“School experience allowed for demonstrating certain skills while presenting my teaching strategies...”

“It provided me an opportunity to use appropriate classroom language...”

“Before attending school experience, I did not practice how to evaluate and use course books...in my school experience period I experienced various systems...”

5. *Understanding and integrating through school experience*

“I discovered how to behave professionally...”

“I learnt how to use the school as my experimental lab...”

“During school experience, I ascertained how to apply organized group/pair/individual work...”

“Promoting one’s professional competence can be best realized through school experience practices...”

As indicated in the quotations for each category, the student teachers specified mostly the positive aspects of school experience as a pathway for professional development and for acquiring professional proficiency. The views of the participants were categorized in Table 6 with the corresponding themes:

Table 6. *Categories of the student teachers’ views about school experience and the corresponding themes*

Categories	Themes				
	1	2	3	4	5
	professionally	sharing others’	developing	enhancing skills	focusing on
	self-	experiences	educational aims	development	learners
	development				

<i>the nature of professional knowledge</i>	Specialized knowledge for teaching and learning	Knowledge in action by taking guidance and suggestions from others	Knowledge in specifying educational aims through feedback	Developing skill-based teaching on principles of teaching	Improving the ability of stimulating classroom management
<i>professional development</i>	Being exposed to classroom research	Appreciating the shared experience of experienced teachers' classes	Deciding on the appropriateness of classroom assessment	Discovering good or bad language teaching behaviors through group work	Evaluating and recording students' performances, giving feedback, instructions, and explanations
<i>the nature of professional consciousness</i>	Building rapport with colleagues	Evaluating school management	Developing experiential knowledge on school policy	Developing new teaching skills by attending school seminars	Reflecting on professional competence and performance
<i>problem-solving</i>	Promoting professional capacity to make adjustments when necessary	Deciding on better ways of teaching through reading relevant literature	Modifying the teaching procedures by developing appropriate teaching strategies	Creating opportunities for developing skill-based knowledge in language use	Developing and evaluating course materials, worksheets for the needs and expectations of learners
<i>understanding and integrating</i>	Bridging the gap between professional and personal behavior	Promoting the ability of participating in school projects with others	Promoting the ability of using the school as lab	Gaining analytical skills by attending school as determined in regular schedule	Regarding learners' expectations, organizing professionally within the school

In all categories, the role of school experience concerning professional knowledge, consciousness, development, problem-solving, and understanding/integrating the issues of school experience was reflected in a positive manner.

To seek answers to the research questions and sub-questions of the study, the above-mentioned differences of teacher learning in microteaching and school-based practices are evaluated through the supported policies in terms of professional knowledge, professional development, professional consciousness, problem solving, and understanding and integrating in the teaching profession. Findings of each sub-question are separately computed through t-tests and displayed in the tables below.

Table 7. *t*-test results in terms of the nature of professional knowledge

Theme	Case	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
<i>the nature of professional knowledge</i>	Microteaching	122	46	10.26	4.01	196	,000
	School experience	96	82	20.88			

Table 7 reveals that the mean score of the participants' professional knowledge through microteaching activities is $\bar{x}=46$ (sd= 10.26) which is considerably lower than the mean score through school experience ($\bar{x}=82$, sd=20.88). The t-test result confirms that there is statistically highly significant difference [$t_{(196)}= 4.01$, ($p<0,01$)] between the mean scores which show the benefits of school experiences in terms of gaining professional knowledge.

Table 8. *t*-test results in terms of professional development

Theme	Case	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
<i>professional development</i>	Microteaching	122	55	11.14	3.07	196	,000
	School experience	96	76.25	18.07			

In Table 8 the mean scores of the participants' professional development through microteaching activities ($\bar{x}=55$, sd= 11.14) and school experience ($\bar{x}=76,25$ sd=18.07) are displayed. According to the t-test result, statistically significant difference [$t_{(196)}= 3.07$ ($p<0,01$)] between the mean scores was discovered. In this respect, it is concluded that school experience contributed a lot to the participants' professional development.

Table 9. *t*-test results in terms of the nature of professional consciousness

Theme	Case	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
<i>the nature of professional consciousness</i>	Microteaching	122	74.5	17.12	2.85	196	,000
	School experience	96	85	21.07			

As revealed in Table 9, the mean score of the participants' professional consciousness through microteaching activities ($\bar{x}=74.5$ sd= 17.12) was detected as lower than that of school experience ($\bar{x}=85$ sd=21.07). The difference is statistically significant [$t_{(196)}= 2.85$, ($p<0,01$)]. In other words, the participants reported high professional consciousness in school experience practices.

Table 10. *t-test results in terms of problem-solving*

Theme	Case	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
problem-solving	Microteaching	122	57	11.48	3.05	196	,000
	School experience	96	87	22.84			

In Table 10, the t-test results designate similarities with the theme results displayed in the tables above. Through school experience activities the student teachers had more opportunities to develop problem-solving abilities ($\bar{x}=87$, $sd=22.84$) when compared to microteaching activities ($\bar{x}=57$, $sd=11.48$). According to the t-test result, statistically significant difference was also obtained between the mean scores [$t_{(196)}=3.05$, ($p<0,01$)]. The contribution of school experience to the student teachers' ability of problem solving cannot be overlooked in this respect.

Table 11. *t-test results in terms of understanding and integrating*

Theme	Case	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
understanding and integrating	Microteaching	122	28.79	7.84	3.98	196	,000
	School experience	96	69.50	15.42			

The final point investigated is understanding and integrating in professional issues through microteaching and school experience. As Table 11 indicates, the mean scores of the participants in microteaching activities ($\bar{x}=28.79$, $sd=7.84$) and school experience ($\bar{x}=69.50$, $sd=15.42$) are substantially divergent. The t-test result statistically confirms the significant difference [$t_{(196)}=3.98$, ($p<0,01$)] between the mean scores.

Discussion

When microteaching and school experience satisfaction levels of the student teachers are evaluated, it is documented that school experience was presupposed to be more beneficial for professional intensification. However, the responses in microteaching questionnaire revealed that in some aspect microteaching activities led to success in school experience process. Microteaching was appreciated as motivating for teaching profession by most student teachers and prompted teaching performance of the student teachers; therefore, fulfilling and implementing school experience activities productively might be come up with their experiences in microteaching. Developing course materials and preparing worksheets in real school context became more trouble-free due to their experiences of developing teaching materials in microteaching process.

Additionally, observing their classmates' microteaching sessions was thought to be contributing for teaching profession; yet, they declared that observing experienced teachers' classes was more contributory to the profession. In microteaching, they got the opportunity to

congregate various teaching models; and in school experience they developed appropriate teaching strategies. In microteaching sessions, they learnt how to design courses for the learners at different age and linguistic levels; the similar positive attitude was detected in school experience, though the ratio was attained as higher. Those mentioned points are the juxtaposition of both processes. However, in a quantity of points microteaching and school experience revealed dissimilar responses. The student teachers claimed that microteaching did not contribute anything to their teaching proficiency corresponding to using appropriate methods and techniques; on the contrary, getting suggestions from mentors on the principles of teaching, using the school as a lab, and developing skill-based knowledge were assumed to be the major gifts of school experience for their teaching profession. When the responses about classroom environments -either real or artificial- are checked, they insisted that microteaching was not so productive since artificial environment the limited class time; therefore, they had adversities while giving feedback and managing the classroom. As for the real classroom environments in school experience, giving feedback, giving instructions and explanations, and performance evaluation were appraised as highly fruitful and avail.

When the items in school experience questionnaire are examined, alternative opportunities are recognized in school experience process: dealing with classroom assessment, obeying professional behavior, attending school as determined in regular schedule, evaluating course books and materials, group-work observation, using simulations, evaluation of the school management, learning about school policy, being exposed to classroom research, team planning with colleagues, participation in school projects, attending seminars, and so forth. Since such opportunities cannot be offered to student teachers during microteaching process, those who perform in school experience can experience all those mentioned practices in terms of professional development and consciousness.

In the research questions and sub-question, it was intended to highlight the benefits of both microteaching and school-experience in terms of professional knowledge, professional development, professional consciousness, problem solving, and understanding and integrating in the teaching profession. For professional knowledge, the results of both microteaching and school experience practices indicated the supreme benefits of school experiences for gaining professional knowledge. Likewise, in terms of professional development, it was also admitted that school experience contributed a lot to the professional development of the participants. For professional consciousness, problem solving abilities,

and understanding professional issues, the contribution of school-based experiences and practices is found out to be highly remarkable.

According to the results, school experience activities offered more encouraging facilities to the participants in terms of professional matters. The results also indicate that high-quality professional learning considerably occurs within school-based contexts independently of faculty-based teacher training outcomes, though such learning can be partially tied to microteaching training process. Interacting with others in school-based contexts, teaching students in real school environments, sharing knowledge with experienced teachers, reflecting on their own teaching, and receiving suggestions and feedback from mentors enable and encourage novice teachers to cope with the teaching issues at the beginning of the profession. These results are in line with the findings of the studies of Buitink, 2009; Khairani, 2011; Stanulis, Little & Wibbens, 2012; Kapadia & Coca, 2007; Ekşi et al., 2019. Contrary to some studies which emphasized the deficient points in school experience (Demirkol, 2004; Gömleksiz et al, 2006; Caires & Almeida, 2005; Aydın, Selçuk & Yeşilyurt, 2007; Aksu & Demirtaş, 2006;) and some studies which generally outlined the problems student teachers encounter (Chambers & Roper, 2000; Güven, 2004; Özmen, 2008), the participants' views demonstrated that they benefited from school experiences by observing and applying all activities in the process of school experience. Additionally, the results demonstrate that the student teachers gained professional maturity in school-based environments. In this respect, schools which prompt professional knowledge, development, and consciousness are ideal learning communities for teachers to be matured as well as students. Professional maturity for teachers, whether novice or experienced, usually expands the understanding, beliefs, attitudes, and teaching skills of teachers.

Conclusion and Suggestions

The positive attitudes toward school experience revealed that school experience build a number of valuable insights about teaching issues such as teachers' professional and personal behaviors, teachers' recognition of teaching profession, the importance of being a competent teacher, teachers' appreciation of students' attitudes and expectations, classroom management, motivation, using teaching aids efficiently, and developing successful teaching strategies in classroom and school, etc.

In the light of the results of this study, the school experience can be valued as a bridging experience between theoretical knowledge and teaching practice in teaching profession. Thus, through the exploration of fears, doubts, needs, expectations and achievements in school-based contexts, student teachers can be aware of overall development and growth of teachers and the guiding principles of teaching (Caires & Almeida, 2005).

With regard to the conclusion of this study, some suggestions can be offered with the aim of evaluating the process of the school experience course. Among these, student teachers should be provided feedback weekly and their experiences should be evaluated cooperatively. They should be encouraged to observe and analyze the classes of experienced teachers. Classroom research and school project studies should be offered as opportunities to student teachers during school experience in order to train them as proficient researchers. Thus, teacher education organizations can develop and attain higher standards. In developing teacher education organizations, priority should be given to the creation of social links and communication between different working groups at different levels (Hökka, Etelapelto & Rasku-Puttonen, 2012). Additionally, throughout the process, student teachers should be encouraged to lecture at schools for being exposed to further experiences in preparing lesson plans, organizing activities, managing classes, evaluating students' performance, and so forth. To conclude, the expectation is that increasing experiences, rather than any definite knowledge, may result in more proficient teaching. The most common outcome of this study is (could be specified as) teacher satisfaction with the professional development.

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Available online at:
<https://dergipark.org.tr/eltri/>
*International Association of Research
in Foreign Language Education and
Applied Linguistics*
ELT Research Journal
2020, 9(1), 54-70
ISSN: 2146-9814

Evaluation of Turkey's New English Language Teaching Program of Lower Secondary School In Terms Of Peace Education

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Received: 2020-06-26 Accepted: 2020-07-02

Abstract

Different types of violence are being experienced in different parts of the world. This situation leads to serious problems such as violating human rights in different aspects of human life and nature. Violence and its effects make peace education significant to overcome violence and its effects in a peaceful way. Accordingly, the present study aimed to investigate whether peace education is integrated with the new English language teaching program (ELTP) of lower secondary education of Turkey by evaluating it in terms of peace education. It was designed as a qualitative study. The new ELTP of lower secondary school was used as the source document to collect the data. Document analysis was generated within the collected data. The findings indicated that the new ELTP of lower secondary school is integrated with peace education through different units in the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grades. They also showed that those units are related to peace education in terms of their themes and/or target language functions. The findings were discussed, the implications and limitations of the study were specified, and suggestions for further studies were made.

Keywords: Peace education, English language teaching program, curriculum evaluation, Turkey

Introduction

Different types of violence such as warfare, ecocide, racism, genocide, sexual abuse, ethnic hatred and domestic violence (Harris, 2004) lead to serious physical, political, ecological, economical and psychological influences (Ghaith & Shaaban, 1994) on the intrapersonal, interpersonal, national and international levels of people's lives (Fountain, 1999; Ghaith & Shaaban, 1994). Considering the types of violence and their effects, dealing with violence has become significant. According to Harris (2004), peace education can contribute to the struggle against the types of violence and their influences on people's lives.

Consequently, understanding what peace education is and how it can be used to deal with different types of violence becomes especially important.

Peace education aims at changing behaviors of children, youth and adults through the required skills, knowledge, attitudes and values to avoid violence and conflict, resolve these issues in a peaceful way and to create necessary conditions for a peaceful environment at different levels of people's lives concerning intrapersonal, interpersonal, national and international aspects (Fountain, 1999). As denoted, it is based on the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that promote the peaceful resolution and avoidance of conflicts and violence by changing behaviors that cause conflicts and violence through education. As a result of this education, what is aimed is to help children, youth and adults to become peaceful human beings (UNESCO, 2001) by transforming their conflict- and violence-provoking behaviors into peace-provoking behaviors. According to UNESCO (2001), a peaceful person has the following features:

1. Being a peacebuilder in his/her community,
2. Being a critical thinker,
3. Showing respect to human dignity,
4. Having inner peace,
5. Thinking positively,
6. Caring the world in terms of the environment and non-human beings,
7. Being able to resolve conflicts peacefully,
8. Finding his/her own true self,
9. Learning and knowing to live together, and
10. Not causing harm and being compassionate.

Corresponding to these features of a peaceful person, peace education can be categorized as personal peace, peace with the human family, and peace with nature as Gebregeorgis (2017), Renner (1991) and Yusuf (2011) stated. According to Renner (1991), personal peace is defined as a person's peace with his/her mind, body and heart. Peace with the human family is related to showing respect to human rights, promoting human rights and justice, resolving and preventing conflicts in a peaceful way, and taking other people's economical and political wellbeing into consideration (Renner, 1991). Renner (2011) related peace with nature to the promotion of environmental sustainability, consciousness and security.

Considering the types and aims of peace education, its significance for every individual and society on the earth is evident, so it should not be included as a separate subject in the curricula, but other subjects such as language teaching can be integrated with peace education (Fountain, 1999). With regard to this notion, language teaching including

English language teaching can promote peace education because languages are also considered as one of the sources of conflicts and violence; therefore, language teaching can contribute to developing a mutual understanding between the speakers of different languages and to resolving conflicts peacefully through this mutual understanding (Fountain, 1999).

When the literature related to peace education and English language teaching is reviewed, it is seen that there are two types of research: conceptual papers and research papers. Abid (2016), Finch (2004), Kruger (2012), Renner (1991), Sun (2017), Şahin (2011), Takkaç Tulgar (2017), Vandrick (1996) and Yusuf (2011) focused on how peace education could be integrated with English language teaching in their conceptual papers. Use of authentic materials to promote critical thinking (Sun, 2017; Vandrick, 1996), integrating peace education with reading (Yusuf, 2011) and how English language teachers can promote peace education in their English classes (Abid, 2016; Kruger, 2012; Şahin, 2011; Yusuf, 2011; Takkaç Tulgar, 2017) were presented as the ways of associating peace education with English language teaching. In their research papers, Arikan (2009), Carmel and Yochanna (2018), Chowdbury (2013), Gebregeorgis (2017) and Gutiérrez, Guerrero and Bohórquez (2020) studied distinct aspects of the integration of peace education with English language teaching. The use of English as a tool to encourage peace-making with prospective English language teachers (Carmel & Yochanna, 2018; Chowdbury, 2013), promoting peace education through memory artifacts (Gutiérrez et al., 2020), contextualizing and teaching English grammar through peace education (Arikan, 2009) and the evaluation of an English language teaching course book through a peace education perspective (Gebregeorgis, 2017) were studied in these research papers. However, how peace education and English language teaching can be consolidated with each other in a curriculum or program were not studied in the related literature. Thus, the present study aimed to find out whether the new English language teaching program (ELTP) of lower secondary education is integrated with peace education and if it is, how it is integrated with peace education by evaluating the new ELTP in terms of peace education. The answers to the following research questions were investigated:

1. Does the new ELTP of lower secondary education allocate any course content for peace education?
2. Which language function(s) related to peace education is/are studied in the new ELTP of lower secondary education?
3. How is/are language function(s) related to peace education integrated with learning objectives in the new ELTP of lower secondary education?

Methodology

Research design

Researchers can explore an issue through qualitative research because it provides a complex and detailed understanding of the issue researched (Creswell, 2007). In accordance with this, the qualitative research design was employed in the present study since the present study aimed to discover whether the new ELTP of lower secondary school was integrated with peace education by evaluating the program in terms of peace education. Thus, qualitative research could provide a detailed and complex understanding of this issue.

Research context

Students study and learn English as a foreign language in primary, lower secondary and high schools in Turkey. There are four grades at primary schools (i.e. 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th grades), lower secondary schools (i.e. 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grades) and high schools (i.e. 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th grades). Students start to learn English in the second grade in primary schools and go on learning English until the twelfth grade at high schools. English language education is designed and implemented according to the English language teaching programs (ELTP) prepared by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) in both public and private primary, lower secondary and high schools. English language teaching course books are also designed, prepared and developed according to the ELTPs of the MoNE.

Data collection tool

The part of the *English Language Teaching Program (Primary and Lower Secondary School 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th Grades)* (MoNE, 2018) of lower secondary school was used to collect the data.

Data analysis

Document analysis was used to analyze the collected data. Document analysis was generated through the four-stage framework of Yıldırım and Şimşek (2013). In the first stage, the new ELTP of lower secondary education was downloaded from the official website of the MoNE. In the second stage, the document originality was provided. In the third stage, the content and organization of the new ELTP of lower secondary school were ensured to be comprehensible because the researcher has been using and working with such documents prepared by the MoNE for more than three years. For the fourth stage, a protocol to perform

the document analysis of the document was prepared and utilized in the document analysis. To provide the reliability of the document analysis, the document was shared with one of the researcher's colleagues who has a Ph.D. degree in English language teaching field and has conducted qualitative studies in English language teaching. The new ELTP of lower secondary school was document analyzed by the researcher and his colleague. The results from the analyses were compared with each other by focusing on the similarities and differences between them.

Results

The findings of the document analysis were presented separately for the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grades according to the research questions in order.

5th Grade

Units related to peace education

There are ten units in the fifth grade. Several units are related to peace education in this grade with regard to the themes and/or target language functions of these units. Units 2 (my hometown) and 6 (movies) are related to peace education due to target language functions, while units 1 (hello), 3 (games and hobbies), 5 (health), 7 (party time), 8 (fitness), 9 (the animal shelter), and 10 (festivals) are also related to it in terms of their themes and target language function.

Language functions to be studied in units related to peace education

In unit 1, students are expected to study meeting and greeting people, expressing their likes/dislikes, and making inquiries. In unit 2, giving and asking for directions simply and explaining the locations of people and things are the target language functions. In unit 3, students are expected to learn how to make a description of what people usually do and express their likes/dislikes and abilities/inabilities. In unit 5, making simple suggestions and talking about needs, illnesses, and feelings are given as target language functions. Unit 6 focuses on expressing personal opinions and likes/dislikes, telling the time, and making the descriptions of people and characters as language functions. The target language functions of unit 7 comprise meeting and greeting people, expressing thanks and obligation, telling the days and dates, and responding to thanks. Unit 8 aims to teach how to make inquiries and suggestions, ask for clarification, accept and refuse suggestions as language functions. Unit 9 aims to help students learn how to ask for permission and describe the actions of animals and people. In unit 10, how to describe repeated actions and general events are the essential language functions.

Integration of language functions related to peace education with learning objectives

According to the learning objectives of unit 1, students can listen and understand personal information. They can talk, introduce themselves, meet other people, and exchange personal information with other people. They can read and understand personal information by means of different materials such as pictures.

Students are expected to listen and understand directions given to go from one place to another as a learning objective in unit 2. They can also talk about the locations of people and things and ask for and give directions in unit 2. They can read and understand information about places in unit 2.

According to the new ELTP of the fifth grade, students can understand oral texts about embracing abilities, hobbies, likes and dislikes in an oral text in unit 3. They can express their abilities, inabilities, likes, dislikes, and hobbies to other people. They can also talk and inform the listener about other people's abilities, inabilities, likes, dislikes, and hobbies.

In unit 5, students can listen, recognize some sickness and identify some suggestions for those sicknesses. They can also listen and understand suggestions made for sicknesses. They can talk about their basic feelings and needs about different sicknesses by naming those sicknesses. They can read and understand texts which comprise information about different sicknesses, feelings and needs.

Students can listen and understand the speech which describes movie characters according to the learning objectives of unit 6. They can express what other people like and dislike in terms of movies and movie characters. They can express their personal opinions on movie characters and movies. They can also tell the time. They can read and understand the information given about movie characters and movies on advertisements and posters.

According to unit 7, students can apprehend requests for permission and responses to them in an oral text. They can tell the dates of an event. They can express obligations and their thanks to people and respond to the thanks specified by other people. They can greet and meet people by using the expressions of greeting and leave-taking. They can also ask for permission and give a response.

Students are supposed to understand oral texts about sports activities and suggestions made for sport activities in those oral texts in unit 8. They can make, accept and refuse suggestions about sports activities. They can also ask for clarification and give personal information. They can understand reading texts about sports activities.

Students can understand the descriptions of the actions of animals and people in oral texts in unit 9. They can express what animals and people are doing at that moment and ask for permission. They can apprehend reading texts about people and animal actions.

Students can comprehend oral texts on distinct festivals around the world. They can make the descriptions of events in a festival. They can recognize numbers from 100 to 1000 hundred in oral texts and articulate them. They can read and understand texts on different festivals around the world.

6th Grade

Units related to peace education

Similar to the 5th grade, there exist ten units in the 6th grade. Units 2 (yummy breakfast), 5 (at the fair) and 6 (occupations) are related to peace education in the 6th grade corresponding to the target language functions. Besides, units 4 (weather and emotions), 9 (saving the planet) and 10 (democracy) are related in terms of their themes and target language functions.

Language functions to be studied in units related to peace education

Unit 2 aims to teach students how to accept and refuse, express their likes and dislikes, and make a description of people's regular actions. In unit 4, students study talking about the weather and weather conditions, making inquiries, and expressing their emotions as language functions. In unit 5, making the description of places and talking about one's feelings, likes and dislikes are studied as language functions. In unit 6, the target language functions are to talk about occupations, ask and answer personal questions, and tell someone the time, days and dates. In unit 9, making and responding to suggestions are the target language functions. In unit 10, explaining past events and the stages of a procedure and generating simple inquiries are focused on as target language functions.

Integration of language functions related to peace education with learning objectives

Students can reflect other people questions about their food preferences and talk about the foods that they like and dislike in unit 2. They can read and understand texts related to food and food preferences.

Students can listen and discover specific information about different weather conditions and emotions in unit 4. They can ask questions about the weather to people and talk about different weather conditions and their feelings. They can read and understand texts in respect to feelings, weather conditions, and the weather.

Students can listen and identify vocabulary utilized to denote the expressions of discrete emotions in unit 5. They can express their opinions and feelings about things and places. They can read and find the main ideas of texts about people's feelings and opinions about things and places.

Students can listen, read and understand the vocabulary related to people's occupations and the time, days, and dates in unit 6. They can talk about occupations, ask other people personal questions and tell them the time, days and dates. They can write about occupations and the dates.

Students can listen and apprehend the attitudes relevant to save energy and protect the environment in unit 9. They can also listen and understand suggestions made to protect nature. They can talk to other people about how to protect the environment and make suggestions on this issue. They can read and identify the texts related to how the environment can and should be protected. They can write about how they and other people can save the environment.

Students can listen to and understand the key features of democracy in unit 10. They can talk about democracy and how a classroom president is selected. They can describe the past and present events. They can read and understand vocabulary related to democracy. They can also write about democracy.

7th Grade

Units related to peace education

Similar to the 5th and 6th grades, there appear ten units in the 7th grade. Themes and target language functions relate units 1 (appearance and personality), 4 (wild animals), 6 (celebrations), 8 (public buildings) and 9 (environment) to peace education. In addition, target language functions relate units 2 (sports), 5 (television) and 7 (dreams) to peace education.

Language functions to be studied in units related to peace education

The purpose of Unit 1 is to teach students how to make descriptions of people and characters through simple inquiries and to compare people by making explanations and giving reasons. Unit 2 aims to teach them how to talk about their own and other people's routines and daily activities and make a description of the regular actions of people by making explanations and giving reasons. The aim of unit 4 is to teach them how to make inquiries and suggestions and talk about the frequency of actions and past events by exerting explanations and reasons. The target language functions in unit 5 are to express preferences and personal opinions, make a description of the regular actions of people and talk about past

events. Making suggestions and arrangements, explaining the sequence of the actions and expressing needs and quantity are the target language functions in unit 6 besides accepting and refusing suggestions. Making predictions about the future and stating reasons and explanations occur as the target language functions in units 7 and 8 in order. Unit 9 aims to teach giving explanations and reasons, making the description of processes and expressing obligations to students.

Integration of language functions related to peace education with learning objectives

Students are expected to listen to and understand oral texts about appearances and personalities in unit 1. They can talk about and report on other people's personalities and appearances. They can read and understand a text related to appearances, personalities, and comparisons of these. They can write a paragraph to compare people with each other.

Students can listen and recognize frequency adverbs in unit 2. They can refer to their daily activities/routines by using frequency adverbs and giving explanations and reasons. They can write about their daily activities/routines through employing frequency adverbs.

Students can listen to, recognize wild animals' names and understand past and present events in unit 4. They can talk to other people about the characteristics of wild animals by asking some questions. They can make suggestions and report on past and present events. They can read, understand past and present events including explanations and reasons and identify the names of wild animals in the texts.

Students can listen to and understand texts about preferences and daily routines in unit 5. They can state their preferences and talk about other people's preferences by asking questions. They can also talk about personal experiences and past events. They can read and understand texts related to past events, daily routine and preferences. They can write about their daily routines and preferences.

In unit 6, students are expected to listen and identify vocabulary related to needs, suggestions and quantity of things. They can state their needs, make suggestions and talk about arrangements and order of events. They can read and understand texts related to celebrations. They can also invite people to a celebration by writing an invitation card.

In unit 7, students are supposed to listen and understand vocabulary with reference to future events and predictions. They can talk about and report on their predictions for the future. They can read and understand texts related to predictions and future events. They can also write about these concerns.

In unit 8, they can identify the names of public places and grasp explanations with their reasons in oral texts. They can make explanations about distinctive topics by expressing reasons and report on different explanations with reasons. They can comprehend texts about explanations given with reasons in reading texts. They can also write about the same subject.

In unit 9, students can understand vocabulary about the environment and follow the description of a process in oral texts. They can talk to other people about obligations and denote a description and instructions for a process. They can read and find specific information in texts about the environment. They can write about the environment and the description of a process.

8th Grade

Units related to peace education

There additionally exist ten units in the 8th grade. Target language functions relate units 3 (in the kitchen), 5 (the internet), 6 (adventures) and 8 (chores) to peace education, while themes and target language functions relate units 1 (friendship), 2 (teen life), 4 (on the phone), 7 (tourism) and 10 (natural forces) to it.

Language functions to be studied in units related to peace education

Students study how to accept and refuse, to apologize, give reasons and explanations, and make inquiries as language functions in unit 1. They learn how to express their likes and dislikes, their preferences, and personal opinions in unit 2. Describing a process, expressing their preferences, and making inquiries are studied in unit 3. Unit 4 aims to train students on how to make and follow phone conversations and express decisions made at the moment of speaking. Unit 5 teaches how to accept, refuse and make excuses to students. In unit 6, students study how to express their preferences by giving reasons and explanations and compare people and/or things. In unit 7, students learn to make the description of places, state their preferences, give explanations and reasons, make comparison and talk about their experiences. How to express obligation, likes/dislikes and responsibilities is studied in unit 8. The target language function in unit 9 is to make predictions about the future by remarking the reasons and results of predictions.

Integration of language functions related to peace education with learning objectives

Students can understand specific information in oral texts related to apologizing, accepting and refusing an invitation/offer, and making inquiries in unit 1. They can take part in conversations on different subjects such as apologizing, accepting and refusing an invitation/offer, and making inquiries. They can make inquiries, make explanation and give

reasons. They can read and understand texts related to friendship and different types of invitations. They can write a letter of apology which specifies their excuse for not attending a party and states reasons for this.

Students can listen and recognize vocabulary related to teenagers' regular activities in unit 2. They can talk about the activities of teenagers, state their preferences, likes and dislikes and describe daily activities. They can read and understand texts about teenagers' regular activities. They can also write about the same subject.

Students can talk to other people about the process of something by asking and answering questions and exchanging information in unit 3. They can describe how something is processed. They can read, understand the texts about and write about the process of something.

In unit 4, students can understand vocabulary related to phone conversations and follow a phone conversation in oral texts. They can make a phone call, ask and respond to questions throughout that call. They can also state the decisions they make whilst the conversation. They can read and understand vocabulary corresponding to making a phone call.

In unit 5, students can understand vocabulary related to the Internet and the main idea of oral texts. They can express their Internet habits and exchange information about the Internet with other people. They can accept and refuse offers in addition to making excuses. They can read and discover the main ideas of and specific information in the texts related to the Internet. They can write about their Internet habits.

In unit 6, students listen to and follow a discussion about adventures. They can take part in conversations and identify their preferences, comparison and reasons. They can compare games and sports. They can read, comprehend the texts about adventures and find out the main points about adventures. They can write about the comparison of two things.

In unit 7, students can listen to and find specific information in oral texts about tourism. They can express their favorite tourist attractions in details and exchange information about tourism with other people. Furthermore, they can reflect their experiences about distinct places. They can read and extract specific information from texts about tourism. They can write and prepare a postcard, a brochure or an advertisement about their favorite tourist attractions.

In unit 8, students can find the main points in oral texts related to people's responsibilities. They can also comprehend likes, dislikes and obligations in oral texts. They

can expound their responsibilities, obligations, likes and dislikes. They can read, understand texts about and write about responsibilities.

In unit 9, students can comprehend the main ideas in TV news concerning natural forces and disasters. They can make predictions about the future of the world, talk about these issues and give reasons for and results of them. They can read and spot specific information in texts about natural disasters and forces. They can write about natural disasters and forces by giving reasons and results.

Discussion

The evaluation of the new ELTP of lower secondary education has showed that peace education has been integrated with the new ELTP in two ways. These ways are (a) themes and target language functions and (b) target language functions.

In the first way, themes have been used to contextualize several units in different grades such as units 5 (health) in the fifth grade, 10 (democracy) in the sixth grade, 1 (appearance and personality) in the seventh grade and 1 (friendship) in the eighth grade as Arikan (2009) did in teaching English grammar. Target language functions are determined according to these themes in those units, and accordingly, the learning objectives of those units are formed. To exemplify, unit 10 in the sixth grade is contextualized through the theme 'democracy' that is directly related to peace education. The target language functions of this unit are explaining past events and the stages of a procedure and making simple inquiries in relation to democracy to which the learning objectives of this unit are related tightly. Students are expected to listen and understand the key features of democracy in addition to talking about democracy and how a classroom president is selected. Besides, they are also supposed to read and understand vocabulary related to democracy as well as write about democracy.

Besides the first way, target language functions relate several units such as unit 6 (movies) in the fifth grade, 6 (occupations) in the sixth grade, 7 (dreams) in the seventh grade and 8 (chores) in the eighth grade to peace education because these target language functions require students' interaction and communication with other people. The learning objectives of such units are related to the target language functions tightly. To illustrate, unit 8 (chores) aims to teach students how to express obligation, likes/dislikes, and responsibilities, which makes students interact and communicate with each other so that students can express them in an appropriate way. Accordingly, all learning objectives in unit 8 are aligned with this language function tightly. Students are expected to find the main points in oral texts related to people's responsibilities and to comprehend likes, dislikes and obligations in oral texts. They are supposed to talk about their responsibilities, obligations, likes and dislikes. They are also

expected to understand reading texts about responsibilities and write about their feelings and responsibilities.

Personal peace, peace with the human family and peace with nature are the three types of peace education (Gebregeorgis, 2017; Renner, 1991; Yusuf, 2011). Considering the themes and target language functions in the new ELTP of lower secondary education, students can learn and study three types of peace education when they learn and study English according to the new ELTP. That is, each grade has units that are related to one or two types of peace education. In the fifth grade, units 1 (hello), 2 (my hometown), 3 (games and hobbies), 5 (health), 6 (movies), 7 (party time), 8 (fitness) and 10 (festivals) are related to personal peace and peace with the human family because of their themes and/or target language functions. Unit 9 (the animal shelter) is related to peace with nature in the fifth grade. In the sixth grade, personal peace and peace with the human family are related to units 2 (yummy breakfast), 5 (at the fair), 6 (occupations) and 10 (democracy), while peace with nature are related to units 4 (weather and emotions) and 9 (saving the planet). In the seventh grade, peace with the human family and personal peace can be taught with units 1 (appearance and personality), 2 (sports), 5 (television), 6 (celebrations), 7 (dreams) and 8 (public buildings). Peace with nature can be taught in units 4 (wild animals) and 9 (environment). In the eighth grade, units 1 (friendship), 2 (teen life), 3 (in the kitchen), 4 (on the phone), 5 (the internet), 6 (adventures), 7 (tourism) and 8 (chores) are related to peace with the human family and personal peace. Unit 10 (natural forces) is related to peace with nature. Unit 5 (health) in the fifth grade can help to understand how units are related to the types of peace education. Students learn how to make simple suggestions and talk about needs, illnesses, and feelings in unit 5. In relation to these language functions, they are expected to recognize some sicknesses and apprehend some suggestions for those sicknesses in oral texts. They are also expected to talk about their basic feelings and needs about different sicknesses by naming those sicknesses in addition to understanding reading texts which reflect information about different sicknesses, feelings and needs. Considering the theme, target language functions, and learning objectives of unit 5, students can learn and talk about their illnesses, needs and feelings when they learn English, so this can contribute to their personal peace as they can learn to pay attention to their health as Renner (1991) stated. Students can also pay attention to the wellbeing of other people since they can also make simple suggestions to people about their illnesses. Therefore, unit 5 can be related to peace with the human family this concern requires considering the wellbeing of other people (Renner, 1991). Unit 9 (saving the planet) in the sixth grade is related to peace with nature. In

unit 9, students learn how to make and respond to suggestions about the protection of nature. In accordance with this target language function, they are expected to explore the attitudes relevant to save energy and protect the environment and to understand suggestions made to protect nature in oral texts. They are also supposed to talk to other people about how to protect the environment and make suggestions for this. Besides, they are expected to grasp the texts related to how the environment can and should be protected in reading texts and to write about how they and other people can save the environment. Therefore, unit 9 can help students to promote environmental sustainability, consciousness and security as Renner (1991) specified.

The new ELTP of lower secondary school is integrated with peace education through several units in the fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grades as Fountain (1999) emphasized that peace education should not be considered as a separate subject in the curriculum, but it can be integrated with other subjects. Therefore, it can contribute to peace education in English language classes as designated in the conceptual papers (Abid, 2016; Finch, 2004; Kruger, 2012; Renner, 1991; Sun, 2017; Şahin, 2011; Takkaç Tulgar, 2017; Vandrick, 1996; Yusuf, 2011) and in the research papers (Arikan, 2009; Carmel & Yochanna, 2018; Chowdbury, 2013; Gebregeorgis, 2017; Gutiérrez et al., 2020). Thus, it can help students to become peaceful people, which is the goal of peace education (UNESCO, 2001).

Conclusion

The findings of the present study indicate that the new ELTP of lower secondary school has several units related to peace education in the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grades. According to the findings, the units are related to peace education with regard to their themes and/or target language functions. Besides, the learning objectives of each unit in the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grades are tightly aligned with the themes and/or target language functions related to peace education. Therefore, the new ELTP of lower secondary school of Turkey can be used to encourage students to grow up as individuals who have personal peace, peace with the human family and peace with nature.

Implications of the present study

The present study shows how peace education can be integrated with an English language teaching program or curriculum at the national level. Curriculum designers and developers and course book writers can integrate peace education with English language teaching by basing the contextualization of units on themes such as human rights and/or target language functions such as expressing opinions, all of which are related to peace education. Then, they can prepare learning objectives by aligning them with themes and/or

target language functions. As a result, they can assist students to become peaceful people by enabling them to learn and study peace education while they study and learn English.

The present study can also enable English language teachers to integrate their English lessons with peace education by following the same procedure. It can also help teachers to assess their syllabi or curricula critically in terms of peace education and to explore their strengths and weaknesses. It can also enable them to overcome the weaknesses of their syllabi and curriculum by showing them how peace education can be integrated with an English language teaching curriculum.

Limitations of the study and suggestions for further research

This research has some limitations. The first limitation is the research context as the present study was implemented in Turkey. The second limitation is the scope of the research as the study evaluated only the new ELTP of the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grades (lower secondary school). The third limitation is that the study did not evaluate the English language teaching courses prepared according to the new ELTP to check how themes, target language functions and learning objectives related to peace education are realized in the course books.

By following the methodology of this study, similar studies can be conducted on the ELTPs of primary schools and high schools in Turkey and on different ELTPs in different countries. The 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grade English language courses of Turkey can be investigated to support the findings of this study. Similar curriculum evaluation studies could be integrated with course book evaluation studies. Thus, the findings of such studies can aid English language teachers, course book writers and curriculum developers to evaluate their own curricula or syllabi, discover the strengths and weaknesses of these concerns and improve their weaknesses in order to help their students to become peaceful people.

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Available online at:
<https://dergipark.org.tr/eltri/>
*International Association of Research
in Foreign Language Education and
Applied Linguistics*
ELT Research Journal
2020, 9(1), 71-89
ISSN: 2146-9814

A Critical Review on The Components of Processability Theory: Identifying the Limitations

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Received: 2020-06-01 Accepted: 2020-06-22

Abstract

There has been a tendency among the second language acquisition/learning theorists to make generalization about the stages that learners go through in learning a second language (L2). Processability Theory, developed by Pienemann (1998), is one of those theories. It is argued in Processability Theory that learners can learn an L2 in an order that they are capable of at specific times. In other words, learners acquire/learn L2s in a predictable order, which is called '*developmental trajectory*'. This article reviews Processability Theory from a critical perspective and investigates the limitations of and ambiguities in the theory through examining previous studies. The issues discussed in this paper include the hierarchical order, hypothesis space, grammar and lexicon, operational definition of language processor and its connection to Neurolinguistics and working memory, overgeneralization of features to all languages, and lexical functional grammar. Based on the review of these issues, it is proposed that Processability Theory may need some modifications and amendments in near future, as there is a need for more empirical studies.

Keywords: Processability theory, processability hierarchy, second language acquisition, working memory, individual differences in language learning, lexical-functional grammar.

Introduction

The factors influencing the process of acquiring/learning a second language (L2), the effects of learners' first language (L1) on this process and the cognitive stages that learners

go through are just a few of the issues which arise while teaching an L2. The challenges faced while teaching an L2 have helped the linguists to enrich the field of second language acquisition (SLA). Throughout the history of SLA, dating back to more than 20 years ago (Gass, 1993), linguists have had different perspectives and priorities to dwell upon. While some of them have had a nativist viewpoint, considering innate capabilities of learners, some others have had an environmentalist viewpoint, emphasizing the social and psychological variables which play an important role in SLA (Escamilla & Grassi, 2000). A great deal of theories, hypotheses and models emerged within these nativist and environmentalist accounts such as the Natural Approach by Krashen (1985), the Output Hypotheses by Swain (1985, 1995, 2005), the Sociocultural Theory by Vygotsky (1978), the Complexity Theory by Larsen-Freeman (2015, 2018), and so on. However, in this review article, the Processability Theory by Pienemann was profoundly investigated by examining its components and identifying some of their limitations, as it is one of the least researched theories among the aforementioned ones.

Theoretical Background

Processability Theory is a theory in the field of SLA and it is proposed in this theory that learners go through some developmental stages in learning languages and learners' accumulation of knowledge is limited to the developmental phase that they are in (Pienemann & Lenzen, 2015). This theory is based on Levelt's (1989) model of language generation, which was inspired by Kempen and Hoenkamp's (1987) computational model. The key propositions underlying this view were reported by Pienemann (2011) as follow:

1. Processing components (such as the Formulator, the Grammatical Encoder and the lexicon) are relatively autonomous specialists which operate largely automatically.
2. Processing is incremental.
3. The output of the processor is linear, while it may not be mapped onto the underlying meaning in a linear way.
4. Grammatical processing has access to a grammatical memory store (p. 28).

The framework of Processability Theory is based on predicting learners' developmental trajectories, and there are certain categorizations of procedures and a time sequence between the developmental trajectories. Thus, learners need to follow each one in an order while producing a sentence. For example, noun procedures follow category procedures. The basic hypothesis behind this order is that the hierarchy is incremental, and it represents the time-course in terms of generation (Pienemann, 1998). Regarding the feature

unification, there is another hierarchy. Each entry in the mental lexicon should have certain values and these values should be unified (Pienemann, 1998). There is a certain hierarchy that starts with no exchange of grammatical information, then grammatical information within a phrase, and finally grammatical information within the sentence, which, in turn, determines the developmental trajectory.

It is also important to mention that Processability Theory is not language-specific, as it is believed that the transfer of grammatical information applied to all languages is considered as a universal framework that has the ability to foresee developmental trajectories for any second language (Pienemann & Lenzing, 2015). However, the examples that are provided for English morphology by Pienemann and Lenzing (2015) demonstrate language-specific features. In other words, Processability Theory does not provide sufficient examples which can fit into any language or to make the theory universal rather than language specific. In addition, as a result of the specific structures of individual languages, their grammars are different, as it is also illustrated in the example of the difference between English and Italian (Pienemann & Lenzing, 2015). Thus, it is crucial to consider the differences between languages that are reflected in lexical-functional grammar (LFG) in different ways aimed at modeling psycholinguistic processes.

While comparing two languages, one should be attentive about whether the languages that are compared are comparable or similar in terms of grammatical functions. Even the translation of each language is specific to itself due to the lexis and discrete linguistic features, and this has been proved with the help of statistical machine translation (SMT) systems since the differences between pairs of languages make the translation quality remarkably distinctive among the SMT systems (Do, Utiyama, & Sumita, 2015). Therefore, grammars of individual languages are considerably different from each other and it is not possible to utilize processability hierarchy in all the languages in the same way as it is claimed. The examples provided by Pienemann (1998) and Pienemann and Lenzing (2015) are not beyond morphological examples which all show the language specific features. As a consequence, these language-specific examples, indeed, refute the claim that the procedures are universal and thus can be applicable to any language.

Furthermore, regarding the LFG, there are three independent levels of representation, which are argument, constituent, and functional structure (Pienemann & Lenzing, 2015). Argument structure refers to the agent and theme in a sentence, while the constituent structure is related to phrase structure of sentences. Last, the functional structure is formed by the grammatical functions in the sentence. On the other hand, lexical mapping, a component

of LFG, indicates the mapping processes from argument structure to functional structure. However, the variability between the agent and the theme constitutes a linearization problem (Pienemann, 1998; Pienemann & Lenzing, 2015). For instance, with passive structures, the linear mapping process is disrupted because of the discrepancy between argument (agent) and functional (subject-object) structures in the initial stages of acquisition/learning (i.e. *agent equals to subject*, which is called *unmarked alignment*). In the early stages, it is directly associated with subject; however, later on, it can be differentiated.

Considering these components of Processability Theory, it is hard to deny that Processability Theory is quite impressive in many aspects. However, some explanations that the theory offers may need further empirical support. Therefore, in this review paper, some of the problematic issues are identified, reviewed, and discussed in the light of empirical evidence from previous studies. However, it is also acknowledged that the lack of studies on Processability Theory may be one of the reasons why certain issues in this theory still need to be clarified.

Issues Related to the Basic Components of Processability Theory

The Hierarchical Problem

According to Pienemann and Lenzing (2015), the four basic constructs of Processability Theory are *the processability hierarchy*, *hypothesis space*, *transfer of grammatical information and feature unification* (i.e., *information matching*), and *LFG*. The processability hierarchy explains how grammatical structures within a sentence interact with each other while an L2 learner processes information. The language processor checks the grammaticality of the sentences in terms of *subject-verb agreement* and *plurality*, for instance. For example, in *David works hard*, the language processor checks whether *David* is followed by *third person singular* ‘-s’ or in a phrase such as *three dogs*, the language processor makes sure that *three* is followed by a plural noun. The reason why this component is named as the processability hierarchy is that it is assumed that learners follow a certain order while acquiring these grammatical structures such as acquiring noun structures, verb structures, sentence structures, and subordinate clause structures, respectively (Pienemann & Lenzing, 2015). The processability hierarchy or the processability stages proposed by Pienemann and Lenzing (2015) is as follows:

1. no procedure (e.g., producing a simple word such as ‘yes’)
2. category procedure (e.g., adding a past tense morpheme to a verb as in ‘talk-**ed**’)
3. noun phrase procedure (e.g., matching plurality as in ‘**two** kids’)

4. verb phrase procedure (e.g., moving an adverb out of the verb phrase to the front of a sentence ‘I went yesterday/yesterday I went’)
5. sentence procedure (e.g., subject-verb agreement as in ‘Peter sees a dog’)
6. subordinate clause procedure (e.g., use of subjunctive in subordinate clauses triggered by information in a main clause as in ‘The doctor insisted that the patient be quiet’) (p.163)

In this theory, it is asserted that language learners do not have other options but to develop their target language along with this hierarchy. Claiming this actually restricts the variability of the output produced by learners. Pienemann and Lenzen (2015) claimed that if a learner is in Stage 3, for example, s/he can process solely phrases and cannot go beyond that stage. Making such a strong overgeneralization seems as if Processability Theory ignores a great number of learners who do not strictly follow this order due to individual differences. In order to prove the hierarchy claim, there is a need for a great number of longitudinal empirical studies. However, the number of studies, which are to be mentioned later in this review, is limited and is insufficient to designate such a claim.

Furthermore, even the proficient users of a language or native speakers can produce ungrammatical and incoherent sentences under stress and they might require assistance at times (Frawley, 1997). In other words, in addition to the fact that each native speaker is different from each other, it would be nothing but an overgeneralization to specify that learners experience the same procedures in the specific stage of the learning process. For example, learner adaptation is one of the concepts that might affect the process of language acquisition/learning. As a result of its dynamic nature, language acquisition/learning is affected by learner’s capability to adapt to specific environment as well as the learner’s individual differences (Thelen & Smith, 1994).

Additionally, proposing a hierarchy that has clear-cut boundaries disregards the other prominent factors in SLA. Each learner is unique, and it means that each learner has his/her way of processing knowledge and goes through distinct psycholinguistic stages. Furthermore, the fact that L1 influence also has a substantial role in acquisition additionally contradicts with the processability hypothesis. The similarities and differences between L1 and the target language may affect this hierarchy, and some learners may skip certain stages depending on their L1 (Khansir & Pakdel, 2019).

The processability hierarchy may easily be challenged by the nonlinearity of learning/acquisition phenomena. Language development cannot be regarded as unidirectional since the performance of the learners can regress or progress at any stage even under the

stable learning conditions (Larsen-Freeman, 1997). There are various components in language development, and each single component of the whole process of language learning is in interaction with each other and those components are constantly transforming, and they are dynamic (Cooper, 1999). However, Processability Theory discounts this dynamicity, variability, and non-linearity. As claimed by Larsen-Freeman (2015) and Hiver and Larsen-Freeman (2020), language learning comprises dynamic, complex, and emerging patterns. Regarding learners' interlanguage, it would be convenient to state that learners continuously adopt new patterns and change the existing ones in a nonlinear fashion. A learner may be at Stage 5 and may be good at sentence procedure according to the processability hierarchy; however, the same learner may move into a country where English is spoken as a native language and may learn new patterns, including new noun phrases (i.e., Stage 3), and still make mistakes. The same learner may jump back to earlier stages and have difficulty with category procedure (i.e., Stage 2) when faced with new words and structures as a result of languages' transformation through time and space. Hadidi Tamjid (2008) claimed, "language is a collection of static units but their use in actual speech involves an active process" (p. 11). Due to the active process and nonlinearity in language learning, it is not possible to confine learner output to a presumed order or hierarchy, not to even mention the learner variability.

Regarding empirical findings, there exist very few studies conducted in the field of SLA within the framework of Processability Theory. This makes it adverse to justify certain features of the theory; however, if the number of those studies increases, some of the points mentioned above could be supported by direct evidence. Alhawary (2003) investigated the acquisition of Arabic morphological features in accordance with the processability hierarchy in Processability Theory. Nine American learners of Arabic as a foreign language took part in the longitudinal study for an academic year. They were all university students who started to learn Arabic with no previous experience in the language. Alhawary (2003) examined the morphological features of noun-adjective agreement (Stage 3 in the study) and subject-verb agreement (Stage 4 in the study) such as masculinity/femininity and singularity/plurality. The participants were interviewed every two weeks, which equaled to ten interviews per participant a year. In order to elicit the target structures, various instruments such as picture description, picture differences, picture sequencing and video story telling were employed as well as informal interviews during the sessions. The results revealed that learners of Arabic acquired subject-verb agreement before noun-adjective agreement, which contradicted to the hierarchy of processability. Thus, Alhawary (2003) concluded that there might be factors affecting processing other than the ones predicted by Processability Theory.

In another longitudinal study, Zhang (2004) investigated the acquisition of the adjective marker *-de* in Chinese as a foreign language. Whether processing constraints in Processability Theory interacted with the categorization of Chinese adjectives and stative verbs was the question posed. In order to respond to the research question, Zhang recruited three volunteers who enrolled in a first-year Chinese course with zero proficiency at a university in Australia. The participants were native speakers of English in their late teens. Data were collected throughout an academic year. The first data collection was 5 weeks after the academic year started. However, the others were implemented every three weeks. Each session lasted about 15 to 50 minutes. The participants completed some tasks such as describing their dormitory and roleplaying. At the end of the tasks, participants had a talk with the interviewer. The sessions were recorded, and then, they were transcribed. In the analysis, the researcher identified and tagged attributive adjectives, the presence and absence of *-de* (ADJ) and Subject-Verb-Statives. The results revealed that *-de* (ADJ) appeared after Subject-Verb-Stative structure, which was in line with Processability Theory acquisition patterns. However, it was true for two of the three participants. Thus, again, generalizing these findings may lead one to wrong conclusions with regard to the hierarchical order in Processability Theory.

Furthermore, in a case study conducted by Iwasaki and Oliver (2018), two constructs of Processability Theory (i.e., Unmarked Alignment Hypothesis (UAH) and Lexical Mapping Hypothesis (LMH)) were investigated in terms of their applicability to learning Japanese as an L2 by a young learner whose native language is English. Specifically, they focused on the acquisition of passive voice, and it was claimed that the result was consistent with the previous studies. That is, the participant in the study acquired the passive voice later than active voice, and this result was given as an evidence for developmental trajectory. However, since there was only one participant, it is difficult to make generalization and support these two components of Processability Theory.

In another small-scale study, Sakai (2008) examined the validity of the theory by analyzing speech data in relation to the acquisition of interrogatives, word order and negation in English. This time, the participants of the study were seven Japanese undergraduate students learning English at a national university in Japan. They were volunteers who had studied English when they were at secondary and high school. Sakai conducted a one-hour session with each participant individually. The participants completed five communicative tasks involving picture description, picture identification, spotting the difference, storytelling, and an interview. The sessions were either video or audio recorded. Sakai and another rater

coded the recordings with respect to the presence of structures attributed to certain stages in Processability Theory such as Subject-Verb-Object (Stage 2) and Auxiliary-2nd (Stage 5). According to the analysis, participants of this study were in Stage 5 and Stage 6. In addition, the results indicated that Japanese learners of English followed the six stages of SLA proposed in Processability Theory. However, this study was a small-scale study with seven students, and only included high-level students. In addition, the session each participant was observed or whose data were obtained took an hour, which limits its generalizability and conclusiveness for Processability Theory.

Yamaguchi and Kawaguchi (2016) conducted a longitudinal study also in Japanese on the acquisition of relative clause structures and found opposing evidence regarding the stages in Processability Theory. In this study, the subject was a Japanese child who was 5 years old at the beginning of the study and they audio-recorded her language acquisition process for two years. According to Processability Theory, the acquisition of the relative clause structures should be at higher stages. However, Yamaguchi and Kawaguchi (2016) argued that some of these structures are acquired at the earlier stages of acquisition while learning English as a second language. They also found that she could produce infinitival relative clause structures at Stage 3, which may be considered as a counter evidence for Processability Theory.

In addition, Buyl and Housen (2015) conducted a study utilizing the framework of Processability Theory. Their primary focus in their study was developmental stages in receptive grammar acquisition. They found that the trajectory stages that 72 Francophone L2 learners in an immersion program followed was in line with Processability Theory's predictions. However, the study was not comprehensive enough as the grammatical structures that they focused on fall into Stage 2 and Stage 5 only. Additionally, it was a cross-sectional study; therefore, it provided limited amount of information. The study may be supporting Processability Theory within itself; however, there is no evidence on Stage 3 and Stage 4. Furthermore, since it was not longitudinal but cross-sectional (i.e., one-shot) design, it is hard to make generalization concerning Processability Theory.

Another study conducted by Spinner and Jung (2018) examined the procedural skills hypothesis of Processability Theory, which claims that learners at a certain stage should behave in a similar way to native speakers regarding the stage they acquired. Specifically, the research study focused on whether the ESL learners in the higher group based on the interview results can also be considered as Stage 5 in the self-paced reading task, which compared native speakers and learners regarding the reading time spent on ungrammatical

structures. The data collection was performed through a self-paced reading task and face-to-face interview. They divided the participants into three groups: low, mixed, and high. However, the results indicated that the learners using Stage 5 structures in an accurate way in the interview were not able to do so in the reading task. Like the previous studies, this study also fails to support Processability Theory. None of the groups spent as much time as native speakers did, which meant they were not able to notice ungrammatical structures.

In another cross-sectional study, Jansen (2008) investigated the acquisition of German word order to test the four predictions of Processability Theory. These predictions were sequential building up of speech processing resources, stages in acquisition, cumulative aspect of stages, and universal limitations on processing resources. Jansen (2008) collected data from 21 adult native speakers of English who were enrolled in different levels of German courses as a second language. The participants completed a conversational task. They individually came together with a German native speaker whom they had not met before. The task was getting to know one another. Each conversation lasted about 45 minutes. The data were recorded and transcribed. Then, subject, verb, and adjunct placement were analysed. The results conformed the predictions of Processability Theory; however, stages in acquisition were less clear and findings regarding universality of limitations were not in line with the studies in the literature.

Is it a Leeway or a Restricting Aspect?

Based on the second component of Processability Theory, named as hypothesis space, it is claimed that the stages proposed in the processability hierarchy permits some leeway. It is asserted that although learners cannot go beyond the boundary of the stage they are capable of, they can still have some leeway at every stage. Pienemann and Lenzing (2015) provided the following example for the hypothesis space. A learner produces questions such as ‘*Where he been? *Where has been? *Where he has been? *He has been where?’ (p. 164). In each case, the learner either avoids using auxiliary or changes the word order and forms an ungrammatical question. It is claimed that different forms of the same usage (e.g., WH-questions) refer to the same learning problem and hypothesis space offers solutions to these problems. Specifically, Pienemann and Lenzing (2015) claimed the following:

During L2 development, learners accumulate grammatical rules and their variants, allowing them to develop individual developmental trajectories while adhering to the overall developmental schedule. In this way, PT accounts for both universal stages of development and individual variation within stages. (p. 160)

However, this claim restricts learner variability mentioned in the previous section, and if this hypothesis were supposed to be correct, learners would not be able to produce correct statements sometimes and incorrect ones at other times. In addition, to a certain extent, it violates the hierarchy component since there are variations within stages in hypothesis space and it is also possible to have variations between the stages. Regardless of the proficiency level of learners, they may produce such ungrammatical utterances under different conditions such as high affective filter (Krashen, 1985) and high anxiety (Horwitz, 2010; Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986). When these individual factors are taken into consideration, it can be observed that ungrammaticality cannot be limited within the stages proposed by processability hierarchy. It may also be inter-stages.

To exemplify, Bonilla (2015) investigated L2 Spanish morphology and syntax development based on the processability hierarchy. First, when the acquisition of syntax was being examined, no evidence was found corresponding to an independent Stage 4. Second, there was some evidence against Unmarked Alignment Hypothesis (UAH). That is, L2 Spanish learners usually omitted subject of the sentence and did not follow canonical word order assumed in Stage 2. Moreover, the participants confused the location of subject-verb agreement in processability hierarchy. Last but not the least, Spanish Learner Language Oral Corpus (SPLLOC) was used to collect data in this study; however, one should accept that speaking is the skill which may develop later than other language skills; therefore, the data should be interpreted carefully. Thus, the results of the study do not thoroughly support the universal developmental stages offered by Processability Theory.

Furthermore, when L2 learners are observed, it is noticed that they do not have any problems with the placement of auxiliaries in questions such as *What is your name? What do you do? How old are you?* because they form these questions without any attempt to think about their structural formations. In addition, these formations may occur at the exceedingly early stages, probably due to exposure to such kind of input multiple times. In other words, automaticity (DeKeyser, 2015) or frequency of input (Swain & Lapkin, 2002) may move the learner, for example, to Stage 5 (i.e., sentence procedure or subject-verb agreement) from Stage 1 (i.e., no procedure). Mozayan (2015) exemplified this by calling them formulaic sentences and asked “If a learner, supposedly at stage 2, producing an utterance like “Where does he live?” which corresponds to Stage 5, to what extent does this falsify the theory.” (p. 5). It is possible that Processability Theory neither has an explanation for this, nor provides empirical studies that investigate data more than observations.

Part of the reason is that observing only learner's output or doing solely discourse analysis discounts the existence of formulaic expressions or frequency/automaticity issues.

Gass and Mackey (2015) also pinpointed this gap. They stated,

...whatever the data source, the important point is not to rely solely on the transcript of the interaction but to investigate the link between interaction and learning by whatever means possible. For this reason, research designs which employ pre-tests and post-tests (and ideally, delayed post-tests and possibly tailor-made post-tests as well) and/or designs that include introspective or retrospective protocols are of value. As research designs progress, clearer answers to the questions about interaction and learning can be obtained. (p. 194)

However, Pienemann and Lenzing (2015) did not pose empirical evidence through different studies or they did not support their claims by triangulating the data. Thus, examining the output departing from other learning components or factors would lead researchers to adopt misleading ideas.

Grammar and Lexicon

According to Processability Theory, every new lexical item needs to be categorized under certain features such as number, person, tense or aspect in learners' lexicon. As argued by Pienemann and Lenzing (2015), to form a grammatical sentence in terms of subject-verb agreement, for example, the number and person aspects should match. However, in order for this argument to be more valid and clear, there should be some further explanation regarding the learning environment or conditions. Pienemann and Lenzing (2015) did not offer much empirical evidence proving this.

Furthermore, every new lexical item's being categorized under the aforementioned features may be applicable to learning a foreign language in a formal or school context; however, it is questionable whether it is additionally applicable to learning the language in a non-standard way. For example, immigrants working in another country usually learn the language through exposure, without receiving any formal education. Thus, it cannot be argued that such learning patterns follow similar developmental trajectories to the learning patterns taking place in school context. Other learning patterns such as deductive or inductive or following bottom-up (implicit) or top-down (explicit) processes seem to be more credible determinants in this process.

Operational Definition of Language Processor and Its Connection to Neurolinguistics and Working Memory

According to Processability Theory, the language processor assists individuals to comprehend and use the target language gradually; and it is the tool or the cognitive device that handles L2 (Pienemann & Lenzing, 2015). It enables tracking the developmental trajectories in learners' comprehension and production. However, the language processor is not operationally defined. What is known about this device is that the architecture of the language processor is compatible with LFG and both the processor and LFG are necessary for Processability Theory to address the developmental problem as well as the logical problem (Pienemann & Lenzing, 2015).

Today, neurolinguistic measures are considered as essential indicators which provide reliable indexes that can explain native-like processing (Roberts, González Alonso, Pliatsikas, & Rothman, 2016). In other words, it is not clear enough whether language processor refers to a kind of cognitive device that can be explained through neurolinguistics. If it does, it should be noted that Processability Theory does not mention anything about neurolinguistics. Even the word *processor* makes researchers think that language needs to be processed for acquisition, which reminds us of brain and processing information. Therefore, further explanation on the language processor is needed, and a clear operational definition of the processor could have been provided for a more solid base for the theory.

Furthermore, the architecture of the language processor also accounts for language processing constraint by individual differences such as word access and working memory. Working memory is a term which was adapted from cognitive psychology referring to the ability of retaining and manipulating a limited and small amount of information to implement a specific task (Baddeley, 2015). It can be defined as a type of memory that changes the new and old information and integrates these into each other (Xu, 2016). Since language acquisition is a process through which the learner modifies and builds on the previous knowledge, working memory may affect this process.

However, Processability Theory does not provide any specific examples to demonstrate to what extent working memory is substantial in language acquisition/learning. According to Indrarathne and Kormos (2017), learners with the ability to hold and update verbal input longer than the others in their working memory are more competent in processing information. In this sense, Processability Theory does not explain how a learner with a better working memory differs from the one who cannot use his or her working memory as effectively as the former. Therefore, the theory fails to explain how working memory affects the performance of the learner.

Lexical-Functional Grammar (LFG)

According to Processability Theory, LFG “has three independent and parallel levels of representation” (Pienemann & Lenzing, 2015, p. 166). These three components are argument structure, constituent structure, and functional structure. The argument structure refers to the doer and the receiver of the action, which are named as *agent* and *theme* in LFG. Constituent structure defines the lexical chunks in sentences in terms of their functions such as noun phrase or verb phrase. Last, functional structure simply refers to grammatical functions of lexical items in a sentence, namely, subject or object.

It seems that LFG explains the concepts that (which) are already well known by means of using different terminologies. In addition, it also embraces several components, including lexical mapping (Bresnan, 2001), unmarked alignment, the TOPIC hypothesis, and the initial L2 grammatical system, which are not going to be denoted in detail in this paper, but the crucial question is whether there is a need to transform this already complex system into a more complex phenomenon by creating fancy terminologies. There is an effort to illustrate the process of language acquisition through some formulations such as processability hypothesis or LFG; however, one should question the validity and generalizability of these arguments, especially when these are not supported by empirical studies. Thus, even if LFG may be legit, it is suggested in the current paper that Pienemann and Lenzing (2015) should provide more support for their claims especially with some studies which draw their data from multiple sources.

For instance, Eguchi and Sugiura (2015) also questioned how applicable Processability Theory is in terms of its arguments related to syntactic and morphological development in a cross-sectional study. Fourteen Japanese young adolescent ESL learners participated in this one-shot study. They concluded that Processability Theory was applicable to some extent; however, they recommended that Processability Theory should be modified, as there were developmental discrepancies in terms of the development of syntax and morphology. Furthermore, the findings of the study conducted by Dyson (2009) showed similar results. It was claimed that the findings of the study could be accounted as evidence as well as counterevidence for Processability Theory. It was suggested that the issues related to syntax and morphology be revised. Therefore, more research studies are needed.

Evidence Supporting the Processability Theory

Despite the issues mentioned earlier which are mostly related to clarifications of some concepts as well as methodological issues of the empirical studies, Processability Theory still

holds some validity. The limitations of certain studies with the processability framework were examined recently; however, there are a few studies that uphold the theory.

For instance, Côté (2020) investigated the predictions of Processability Theory on gender agreement, specifically in noun phrase (NP), verb phrase (VP) and relative clause (CP). As noted in the study reports, nouns are either feminine or masculine in French; therefore, “adjectives and determiners must agree in gender with the noun they modify” (p. 2). In order to observe gender agreement in three different stages, Côté worked with 45 native speakers of English, who were intermediate level French students at the time. The task of the study was spotting the difference. The participants completed the task individually with Côté. That is, Côté and a participant looked at a computer screen that demonstrated a series of illustrations. The participant was provided with a list of adjectives they could use. First, Côté described the picture sentence by sentence. Target structures (NP, VP, CP) were deliberately used in the descriptions to stimulate participants to use them. If the participant thought that the sentence matched the picture, s/he repeated it. If not, the participant described the picture using adjectives assigned previously. These sessions were audio-recorded to be transcribed and analysed afterwards. The analysis indicated that learners produced noun-adjective agreement correctly in NPs the most and in CPs the least, while VPs were in between. The results were in accordance with Processability Theory hypothesis, which upholds processability hierarchy among phrases. However, the data were focused on accuracy, not emergence although Processability Theory relies on emergence of structures. In addition, the data were first elicited by the researcher; thus, it may be comprising some bias; in other words, the learner output was elicited not naturally but with the help of the researcher.

In another study, Håkansson and Norrby (2010) investigated grammar, pragmatics, and lexicon with respect to the effect of the environment on L2 Swedish acquisition. They implemented a longitudinal comparative study encapsulating two different experiment groups of intermediate learners of Swedish, and one control group formed by native speakers of Swedish. One group regarding learners of Swedish consisted of university students who learn Swedish in Sweden. The other group learning Swedish was of university students in Australia. Native speakers were selected among university students in Sweden. All groups could speak English. Håkansson and Norrby (2010) compared the development of grammar in learners residing in Sweden and Australia with regard to Processability Theory. They examined the data to explore whether these cohorts experience the same developmental stages in different environments. Data were collected in three discrete two-week time periods over eight months. The participants were expected to write free compositions on a childhood

memory, their first toy, and their lives in ten years. Furthermore, they translated a low-level text from English to Swedish. The text was specifically designed for the experiment. That is, it was first prepared in Swedish to provide “obligatory contexts for NP agreement, predicative agreement, subject-verb inversion, and subordinate clause word order” (Håkansson & Norrby, 2010, p. 635). Then a native speaker of English translated the text into English. In addition to translation and composition tasks, participants performed a communicative task and an interview. The data were analyzed in terms of Stage 2 (plural and tense markings), Stage 3 (noun phrase agreement), Stage 4 (subject-verb inversion and predicative agreement) and Stage 5 (subordinate clause word order). The results indicated that groups followed the predictions of Processability Theory concerning the development of morphosyntax although their developments differed in time periods.

Conclusion

Processability Theory is considerably impressive in terms of its explanations of learners’ comprehending linguistic structures in the process of language acquisition/learning. It is comprehensive enough considering certain languages separately examined, including English, Italian, Japanese, and Chinese. However, some issues mentioned earlier could be reconsidered in the theory to convert this theory into a more comprehensive one. There should be more concrete examples and explanations to support the arguments such as the hierarchy claim and language processor definition. The lack of longitudinal empirical studies also contributes to this ambiguity. Conducting more studies within Processability Theory framework would strengthen the theory.

In addition, according to the processability hierarchy, there is a predictable development as mentioned earlier, and this is against the nature of second language acquisition/learning because this would mean that there cannot be any differences among the second language learners. This is the opposite of what Larsen-Freeman (1997) claimed in Chaos/Complexity Theory, which is a more recent and widely accepted theory compared to Processability Theory (Hiver & Larsen-Freeman, 2020).

Furthermore, encouraging the notion that the theory is applicable to all languages makes the linguists question the validity of the theory since the examples were drawn only from several languages. Even in those languages, only limited range of grammatical features are exemplified, and these must be revisited through more empirical studies. In doing this, individual differences must be considered owing to languages’ being non-linear and dynamic. However, language acquisition/learning is viewed as a linear process in Processability Theory.

In this review article, Processability Theory along with its components was examined from a critical point of view. After analysing its components in detail and reviewing the existing studies that were conducted within the framework of Processability Theory, it could be concluded that the claims mentioned earlier were over-stated by the theorists. Therefore, it is crucial to conduct further longitudinal studies and revise the theory by considering the previous and prospective findings.

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Available online at:
<https://dergipark.org.tr/eltri/>
*International Association of Research
in Foreign Language Education and
Applied Linguistics*
ELT Research Journal
2020, 9(1), 90-107
ISSN: 2146-9814

Turkish Tertiary Level Voluntary Intensive English Program Students' Perceptions of Autonomy and Autonomous Activities in EFL Classes

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Received: 2020-02-10 Accepted: 2020-06-25

Abstract

Language learner autonomy is an important concept that can change the English as a Foreign Language (EFL henceforth) world as giving learners control and responsibility for their language learning process. This study takes place in the EFL environment in a voluntary intensive English program at a state university in Turkey. In this program, there is an ongoing problem of drop-outs and failures each year, so the study was conducted to see if this phenomenon can be explained via autonomy. An explanatory sequential mixed-method study design was used. Autonomy Perception Scale was used to gather quantitative data, which was analyzed by means of IBM SPSS 22.0, and structured interview forms were utilized to collect qualitative data whose content was analyzed. Findings demonstrated that these students were not efficiently autonomous, there was no significant difference between genders, and many activities were conducted by adequately autonomous learners to promote learner autonomy levels in this program. Results were discussed and future implications were made.

Keywords: autonomy, language learner autonomy, autonomous activities, intensive English program (IEP).

Introduction

Autonomy has been an area of interest in English Language Teaching (ELT) world since it was introduced to educational fields as a desirable trait of a language learner in the second half of the 20th century, when student-centered approaches to language learning became popular. Autonomy is an individual difference which emerged as a result of these student-centered approaches, and it still affects the ELT world today.

Language learner autonomy is at the center of both language learning theory and practice (Little, 2007) due to the fact that language learning is individualistic; therefore, it is just possible to decide, monitor, and assess it by language learners themselves (Wang, 2011). Although learner autonomy has become one of the key goals in higher education (Baume, 1992), there are few studies in Turkey which identified autonomous language learners at different levels of education, and looked into whether they had some common activities as a sign of being autonomous. Also, the number of studies investigating the relationship and learner autonomy is insufficient (Üstünlüoğlu, 2009; Varol & Yılmaz, 2010; Abdel Razeq, 2014; Mardjuki, 2018) Furthermore, they have contradictory results. Moreover, although autonomy has been widely studied all over the world, there is still a need to understand the activities of autonomous language learners. Thus, this study aims to identify autonomous learners in a tertiary level voluntary intensive English program, to compare autonomy levels of female and male students, and investigate their autonomous activities in their context to guide other language learners.

Learner Autonomy

The concept of 'autonomy has many definitions stated by different scholars focusing on different ideas about it. One of the first definitions of autonomy is by Holec, who defines autonomy as 'the ability to take charge of one's own learning to have, and to hold the responsibility for all the decisions concerning all aspects of this learning'(1981, p.3). In one of the earliest definitions, Dickinson (1987) defines it as 'the situation in which learner is totally responsible for all of the decisions concerned with the learning and the implementation of those decisions' (p.11). Smith (2003) states that Holec's definition is still the most widely-accepted and cited one, but there are many points to be discussed in it, such as what "the ability to take charge" means and how people's own learning can happen in a specific context. Thus, it is necessary to 'focus on when, where and how of language learning more' (Benson, 2016, p.15) because learners may affect when, where, and how the learning occurs, which makes them gain autonomy.

Researchers also identify autonomy as a social process which has three important features: It changes over time, it is context-bound and socially mediated (Little, 1991; Kumaravadivelu, 2003; Palfreyman, 2003; Murray, 2011; Paiva, 2011). Some researchers also claim autonomy occurs as a result of social interactions with peers and teachers (Ryan, 1991; Little, 2000, 2003; Kumaravadivelu, 2003; Palfreyman, 2003; Raya & Lamb 2008; Smith, Kuchah & Lamb, 2018). Thus, pair work and group work are valued in modern language education approaches as they are known to promote learner autonomy (Smith, Kuchah & Lamb, 2018).

Other researchers focus on the relationship between the process of language learning and autonomy. Nunan (1997) suggests that developing autonomy is a gradual process whilst learning a language. According to Little (2003), learner autonomy includes an ability to set specific learning goals, watch the progress and evaluate the learning outcomes via self-assessment procedures. In addition, during this process, learner autonomy necessitates

collaborative work with peers and teachers. These explanations complete the previous definitions by explaining where, when, and how, so they have practical implications.

There are some tertiary level studies that examine the perceptions about learner autonomy such as studies about teachers' perceptions about learner autonomy (Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2012; Al-Busaidi & Al-Maamari, 2014), the perceptions of both students and teachers (Lai, Yeung, & Hu, 2016), and perceptions of learner and teacher autonomy in Turkey (Üstünlüoğlu, 2009; Tanyeli & Kuter, 2013). These studies about perceptions have contradictory results, which makes it difficult to generalize the results. Ünal, Çeliköz and Sari (2017) search for the relationship between autonomy and proficiency similar to Dafei (2007). Han (2014) gathers studies about teachers' role in fostering autonomy in a literature review. These studies are some of the few studies conducted on autonomy in ELT area in Turkey.

Autonomous Language Learners

In the process focused approaches mentioned above, gaining autonomy is a process like language learning itself, and they both comprise several different pieces. It is essential to find out how they affect each other so that a learner can be called autonomous. The features of autonomous language learners are still discussed around the world, and many studies give definitions and explanations of it. In one of these studies, Harmer (2001) states that to be an autonomous language learner, a learner needs to spend time to learn out of class, to be an active participant and develop their strategies to learn appropriately. There are several internal and situational factors affecting autonomy, and the interaction between these factors determines how autonomous a learner is (Benson, 2001) such as their previous experiences of language learning (Nunan, 1997). Autonomous language learners need to utilize the target language by listening, speaking, reading, and writing with a reasonable mastery of target language grammar rules to develop their proficiency so that they can interact with other speakers in the future (Littlewood, 1996; Macaro, 1997; Little, 2003).

Littlewood (1996) defines that the aim of teaching is to help learners learn more independently, yet Little (1991) introduces the idea of interdependence over independence. The independence of autonomous learners is enriched by interdependence (Little, 2003). In addition, he emphasizes that autonomous learners do not need to do things by themselves, but rather for themselves (Little, 2007). This idea complies with the idea that autonomy is a result of social interactions (presented above). Autonomous language learners are in interaction with their peers and teachers to learn the language better. As learning a language necessitates active involvement and using the target language, learner autonomy is a substantial aspect of effective language learning (Dickinson, 1996; Wang & Peeverly, 1986; Little, 2007; Wang, 2011). In this way, it is possible to say that autonomous language learners are usually active during the learning process and willing to communicate in the target language, which is desired in language classes to transform them into successful learners. Autonomous language learners utilize their language learning environment, evaluate their own language learning process and apply necessary language learning strategies (Paiva, 2011).

As the concept of autonomy emerged in Europe, it is discussed to be a European concept related to its culture; however, it has been found to have relevance to learners to other cultures such as learners from developing countries (Smith, Kuchah & Lamb, 2018). With almost no exception, learners who can successfully learn a language in developing countries, where English is mostly the second language or the first foreign language, are found to be autonomous (Dafei, 2007; Smith, Kuchah & Lamb, 2018). As Turkey is an EFL (English as a foreign language) context, it is essential for the learners of English in Turkey to become autonomous so as to overcome the obstacles they come across on their path.

Autonomy in Formal Education

Autonomy in a formal education context is related to learners' desire and capacity to control their own learning process in a class environment in interacting with peers and teachers. Macaro (1997) states that autonomy is a skill to be acquired by learning how to decide one's own learning process and to be allowed to decide about oneself. In accordance with this, autonomy in a formal education environment encapsulates negotiations between learner and teacher about decisions to be made, needs of the learners and the organization of the groups (Macaro, 1997). While emphasizing learners' responsibility on the language learning process, autonomy does not exclude classroom teaching as learners can contribute to the decision-making and planning process in and out of classroom (Little, 1991).

Littlewood (1999) summarizes that being an autonomous language learner is crucial both because language learning is an individual process to be managed by learners themselves instead of teachers in formal education contexts, and they will continue learning languages even subsequent to their formal education period. In a formal education context, learners should have the capacity to manage their learning process inside and outside the classroom, help to build an ideal learning environment and collaborate with their peers and teachers to have effective learning (Benson, 2001).

This study was conducted in a tertiary level voluntary intensive English program, which means students choose to study in this program as an extra year with internal reasons such as having a better job in the future or external reasons such as elders' recommendations in their first year at university. The medium of language is Turkish at this university. Additionally, this program has no negative outcomes for unsuccessful students, so nearly half of the students show a tendency to drop out of the program before the end or fail to complete it successfully. Some of the students fail to meet the requirements of the program such as studying or doing homework. As autonomy is a concept related to the situation, the study was conducted to discover if these learners are autonomous, if there are significant differences between genders, and to investigate their autonomous ways of learning English. To achieve this aim, an explanatory sequential mixed-method study design was applied to neutralize the weaknesses of each form by gathering quantitative data to get statistical information and qualitative data to gain some insight (Creswell, 2014). For each research purpose, the following research questions were addressed:

1. What are the autonomy perception levels of the students studying in this tertiary level voluntary intensive English program?
2. Are there any significant differences in the autonomy perception levels between male and female students studying in this tertiary level voluntary intensive English program?
3. What are autonomous activities that are conducted by autonomous learners to learn English better?

Methodology

Participants

The study has a convenience sampling procedure as it was conducted with a specific purpose of studying in this program in the 2018-2019 fall semester. 129 students, who were still registered for the program at the time of the collection, participated in the study. Students' ages ranged from 17 to 23 (with a mean of 18 years 8 months). 81 students were male, and 48 students were female. 29 students studied in B1 level classes and 100 students studied in A2 level classes (who were placed in their groups with a proficiency exam at the beginning of the semester). Participation in the study was voluntary, and students signed consent forms before participation in which they were informed about the study and the researcher. As autonomous learners needed to be called later for further information, students were assigned numbers before the study on their consent forms and scales and they were requested to write their phone numbers on consent forms.

Instruments

Data triangulation was used in the study in order to validate quantitative findings with the qualitative data gathered (Dörnyei, 2007). To gather quantitative data, Autonomy Perception Scale developed by Demirtaş (2010) was used. He adopted the scale from Figura and Jarvis (2007) and translated it in Turkish for his thesis. He generated the factor analysis and he found all the items were loaded in one factor, so confirmatory factor analysis was conducted. As Demirtaş discovered one factor, the one-factor option was selected. With the accepted limit .25, all the items were loaded in one factor.

First, a small-scale pilot study was conducted with a class of students (N=15) in the same program, who were not included in the total data later to measure the reliability of the scale in this context. As there is only one factor, the overall reliability of the scale was calculated. Cronbach's alfa value of the internal consistency reliability test was .87. As it was above .80, it can be called reliable, according to Dörnyei (2007). Therefore, it was decided to be employed for the study.

The scale embraces two parts: The first part asks for demographic information such as gender, age, and the length of learning English. The second part encapsulates 30 questions with a 5-point Likert scale to show the frequency of the given statement (1=never, 2=rarely, 3=sometimes, 4=often, 5=always). The scale was applied in Turkish to hinder any misunderstandings due to the lack of English proficiency of the students.

For the qualitative part of the study, autonomous language learners were requested to respond to an online structured interview form with eleven open-ended questions related to their autonomous activities related to planning, improving skills, vocabulary knowledge and

grammar competency, peer cooperation, use of technology and self-assessment, which are the key concepts related to learner autonomy both in the scale and literature reviewed. They were given 3 days' time to complete the part. It was expected to take nearly half-an-hour to finish it.

Data Collection and Analysis

Firstly, to collect quantitative data, necessary permission was obtained from the School of Foreign Languages administration. All possible participants were given numbers both on their consent forms and scales to refer them back if they were found to be autonomous learners. In this way, they did not have to write their names, but the researcher guaranteed that she could contact them afterwards in case she needed it. Autonomy Perception Scale by Demirtaş (2010) was distributed to all classes at the same time on December 20th, 2018 after necessary information was given to the teachers to apply them and to the students on their consent forms. It took nearly 15 minutes to complete the scale. It included items such as 'İngilizce öğrenme sürecimi planlarım (I plan my English learning process)'. IBM SPSS 22.0 statistical package was used to analyze quantitative data. It was analyzed by descriptive statistics such as mean scores and frequencies of individual questions, and the overall mean score of each student was calculated to extract autonomous language learners. To evaluate the mean scores, evaluation criteria were adopted from Demirtaş (2010). Means between 0-1.49 were evaluated as the activity was not conducted. The mean range between 1,50-2,49 was evaluated as the activity was not preferred. The mean range between 2,50-3,49 was thought to be conducted inadequately, while the mean range between 3,50-4,49 was evaluated to be conducted adequately. Means 4,50 and above were evaluated to be done effectively.

To answer the second research question, the test of normality was conducted to see if the data were normally distributed. If the skewness and kurtosis are between +1.0 and -1.0, the data is accepted as normally distributed (Barrett, Morgan, Leech and Gloeckner, 2011). Thus, parametric tests could be used to analyse it. Independent samples t-test was used to investigate if there was any significant difference between female and male students.

To answer the third research question, thirty-two students who were identified as adequately autonomous learners were contacted. Since their semester ended and they left for their hometown, the contact with students was supplied via mobile phones and requested to complete a structured interview form online with eleven open-ended questions. Fourteen students participated in this part of the study. Three days' time was given to complete the forms and promised to be awarded with lunch when they returned. Their answers were recorded, and the content was analyzed to find any patterns in their autonomous activities.

Results

Autonomy Perception Levels of Students

The first research question intended to explore what the students' levels of autonomy perception were. To answer the first research question, descriptive statistics was conducted, and mean scores of all questions were calculated. Table 1 shows the overall descriptive statistics (in the appendix).

According to the statistical information in Table 1, none of the mean scores of the questions indicated the activities were performed efficiently by the students. Out of thirty questions in the scale, seven of the questions -3, 4, 8, 14, 15, 16, 20- showed the activities were adequately done by the students. Thus, it can be specified that these students usually identify their English learning aims (M=3,65), look for better ways to learn English (M=3,61) and they get help from peers and teachers when they need it (M=3,84). To improve their listening skill, they focus on new words during listening (M=3,55). They listen to things again to understand better (M=3,53) and listen to songs in English (M=3,73). They use contextual clues to understand better while reading (3,55). In all other questions, the mean scores demonstrated that the students do not do the activity required, or they do it inadequately.

When it comes to individual students' autonomy levels, the frequency was calculated according to the mean scores of students. The results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Autonomy Perception Mean Scores of Individual Students

Ranges	Frequency	Percent
Students between 0-1,49	3	2,3
Students between 1,50-2,49	27	20,9
Students between 2,50-3,49	67	52
Students between 3,50-4,49	32	24,8
Students between 4,50-5,00	0	0
Total	129	100,0

According to the results in Table 2, no students were highly autonomous or could do the activities questioned effectively. There are 32 students who performed these activities adequately and can be called autonomous, while 67 students implemented them inadequately. 30 students did not do these activities.

The Gender Difference

The second research question was asked to investigate if there was any significant difference in autonomy levels of female and male students. To answer this question, independent samples T-test was applied. Mean score of male students was 2,99, while female students' mean score was 3,05. Independent samples T-test showed there was no significant difference in autonomy levels of male and female students in this program ($.617 > .005$).

Activities of Autonomous Students

To answer the last research question, structured interview forms were analyzed for their content and some frequencies were identified. In the descriptive questions part, 57,1 % of the students were male, and 42,9% of the students were female. Moreover, they were asked how they decided to join this voluntary program, and 92,9 % of the students answered that it was their own choice, which was coherent with the responses to previous autonomy perception questionnaire. Only 7,1 % told a teacher recommended them.

The first question intended to explore if the students had planned their English learning process, which is an important sign of autonomy. Out of fourteen students, five

students answered they had not planned their learning process, whereas nine students said they had planned their learning process, as identified in Table 5. Three students denoted they had planned it, but they had not explained it. Four students planned their learning in the long term, and two students planned their vocabulary learning process.

Table 5

Autonomy in Planning English Language Learning

Sub-Category	Frequency (n)	Example Meaning Unit
General Process	4	"Seviyem A2 idi 1. dönem B1 2.dönem B2 ve asıl mesleki bölümümde ise C1 ve mesleki İngilizce öğrenmeyi amaçladım (S8)." (I was A2 level. I aimed being B1 in the first semester, B2 in the second semester, in my department C1 and vocational English.)
Vocabulary Learning	2	"Gerek derste duyduğum bilmediğim kelimeleri not alarak gerekse izlediğim ve izlemekte olduğum yabancı diziler ve filmlerde kendime göre önemli gördüğüm kalıpları ve kelimeleri zihnime yerleştirerek (S2)." (Not only by taking notes of the words I hear and don't know, but also memorizing phrases and words I thought as important in foreign TV series and films.)

The second question intended to search whether the students searched for extra resources to help their English learning process. Twelve out of fourteen students answered they searched for extra resources, but three of them did not reflect their answers. The other nine students explained their preferences, as designated in Table 6. Five students remarked six different uses of the Internet and Internet-based resources. Four students referred to using websites. Two students emphasized using videos to improve their English. One student expounded downloading useful applications and use social media pages. In addition, four students were found to use resource books.

Table 6

Autonomy in Choosing Extra Resources

Sub-Category	Frequency (n)	Example Meaning Unit
Websites	4	"...internet sitelerinden yardım alıyorum (S5)." (I get help from internet websites.)
Videos	2	"...internet üzerinde vloglar travel country tarzında videoları kaynak seçtim (S9)." (I chose vlogs and videos related to travel and country.)
Resource Books	4	"...bir çok farklı sözlük ve kitap gibi kaynaklardan yardım alıyorum (S1)." (I get help from many different resources like dictionary and book.)
Reading passages	1	"Kendi seviyemde anlayacağım şekilde yazıları bulmaya çalışırım (S4)." (I try to find reading passages which are in my level and I can understand.)

Use of Applications 1	“Telefonuma İngilizceyi daha kolay ve hızlı öğrenebileceğimi düşündüğüm uygulamalar indirdim (S11).” (I downloaded applications on my mobile via which I thought I could learn English easier and faster.
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The third question was reflected to know if the students did anything to improve their speaking skills out of class. All students answered they did something to develop their speaking skills, as explained in Table 7. Thirteen students stated they spoke English with their peers, teachers, and family. Three students mentioned to use the Internet, and one student specified that they read aloud to improve his/her pronunciation.

Table 7

Autonomy in Improving Speaking in English

Sub-Category	Frequency (n)	Example Meaning Unit
Talking to peers	11	“...yabancı bir kaç arkadaşım ile konuşmaya çalışıyorum (S1).” (I’m trying to talk to some foreign friends.)
Talking to family	2	“...babam ve yabancı dil bilen arkadaşlarımla günlük konuşmalar hatta yazışmalarda İngilizce kullanmaya çalışıyorum (S5).” (I’m trying to use English in daily speech and even writing with my dad and friends who knows it.)
Talking to teachers	1	“Yabancı hocalarımla konuşmaya çalışıyorum her fırsatta (S3).” (I’m trying to speak to my foreign teachers in every opportunity.)
Using online resources	3	“Sosyal medyada İngilizce konuşan insanlarla sohbet ederim (S7).” (I chat with people who speak English in social media.)
Pronunciation practice	1	“Evde ders çalışırken veya İngilizce bir yazı gördüğümde bunları sesli okurum (S11).” (I read aloud while studying or when I see a text in English.)

The fourth question investigated whether the students did anything to improve their listening skills out of class. Thirteen out of fourteen students answered it positively, and explained they used some means of technology to improve this skill (Table 8). Eight students denoted listening to music, whereas ten students mentioned watching something such as videos, films, TV series. One student remarked s/he used an application with listening exercises.

Table 8

Autonomy in Improving Listening in English

Sub-Category	Frequency (n)	Example Meaning Unit
Listening to music	8	“Müzik listeme her gün yeni bir İngilizce şarkı eklerim (S8).” (I add a new English song to my music list every day.)
Watching something	10	“Youtube gibi platformlarda video izlerim (S6).” (I watch videos on platforms such as Youtube.)

Using an application 1 “Telefonuma uygulama indirdim. Bize film kesitleri sunuyorlar istersek İngilizce alt yazılı da yapabiliyoruz (S11).” (I downloaded an application on my phone. They present us film parts, if we want we can make it with English subtitles.)

The fifth question was reflected to see if the students did anything to improve their writing skills. Eleven of them expounded they did something to improve it even though there were not common trends (Table 9). Three students remarked that they chatted online by writing, whereas five students signified they made some means of writing practice. Two students emphasized translating from Turkish to English or vice versa.

Table 9

Autonomy in Improving Writing in English

Sub-Category	Frequency (n)	Example Meaning Unit
Written chat	4	“Sanal ortamda arkadaşlarımla İngilizce sohbet etmeye çalışıyoruz (S11).” (We are trying to chat in English with my friends online.)
Writing practice	5	“Orada geçen bazı sözleri cümleleri alıp kendime uyarlayıp örnek cümle yazmaya çalışıyorum (S9).” (I’m trying to write example sentences by adapting some sentences from there.)
Translation	2	“Türkçe metinleri ingilizceye çeviririm (S10).” I translate Turkish texts to English.)

The sixth question asked the students if they did anything to improve their reading skills. Twelve students explained what they did for it, which is demonstrated in Table 10. Nine students identified they read some means of written texts such as books, stories, short passages. Three students specified they read whatever they found. One student said s/he read s/he reread what had been covered throughout the courses.

Table 10

Autonomy in Improving Reading in English

Sub-Category	Frequency (n)	Example Meaning Unit
Reading texts	9	“İngilizce kitap okuyorum (S1,S3).” (I’m reading books in English.)
Read everything they find	3	“...karsima cikan her ingilizce sey i okuyup anlamaya calisiyorum (S2, S3, S11)
Reread previous items	1	“Okulda geçtiğimiz yerleri yurt ortamında ders çalışırken tek basıma okumaya özen gösteririm (S9).” (I reread the parts we covered at school while studying in dormitory on my own.)

The seventh question was verbalized to learn if these students did anything to learn grammar better. Four of them said they did nothing to improve it. Four students stated they did exercises, whereas two students denoted they made revisions. Three of them remarked

they watched videos, and one of them told s/he read books to learn grammar. Examples are demonstrated in Table 11.

Table 11

Autonomy in Studying English Grammar

Sub-Category	Frequency (n)	Example Meaning Unit
Doing Exercises	5	“(tekrarın) ardından konu ile ilgili test çözüyorum (S1, S10).” (After the revision I solve tests related to the topic.)
Make Revisions	2	“Genelde sınıfta öğrendiğim konuyu eve geldiğimde tekrar ediyorum (S1).” (I usually revise the topic I learned at school when I come home.)
Watching videos	3	“İnternette konu anlatımlı videolar izlerim (S7).” (I watch videos on the Internet which tell the subjects.)
Reading books	1	“Kitap okurum (S6).” (I read books).

The eighth question was reflected to ask students whether they did anything to develop their vocabulary knowledge (Table 12). Six students just mentioned they looked up the new words in a dictionary, whereas four of them expounded they noted down new words as well. Two students explained they had vocabulary notebooks, two of them memorized new words, and three of them used these newly memorized vocabulary items so as to recall them. Two students specified they downloaded applications to learn vocabulary.

Table 12

Autonomy in Studying English Vocabulary

Sub-Category	Frequency (n)	Example Meaning Unit
Looking up new words	6	“Bilmediğim veya merak ettiğim kelimeleri (sözlükten) bulur(um) (S2).” (I look up the words I don’t know, or I wonder.)
Taking notes	4	“Bilmediğim kelimeleri not alıp açıklamalar yazıyorum (S3).” (I take notes of the words I don’t know and write explanations.)
Vocabulary Notebook	2	“Kelime defteri oluşturuyorum (S3).” (I make a vocabulary notebook.)
Memorising	2	“Yeni gördüğüm kelimeleri ezberlemeye gayret ederim (S7).” (I memorise the words I see for the first time.)
Using the words	3	“Öğrendiğim yeni kelimeleri sık sık kullanırım (S10).” (I frequently use the new words I have learned.)
Applications	2	“Uygulamaları yükler ona göre çalışırım (S6).” (I download applications and study accordingly.)

The ninth question was figured to explore if the students helped each other to learn English. Although all the students but one answered positively, only seven of them explained the process. All seven students said they studied together with their friends, and two of them added they chatted online with their friends in English, as indicated in Table 13.

Table 13

Autonomy in Cooperation

Sub-Category	Frequency (n)	Example Meaning Unit
Studying together	7	"Birbirimize anlatıyoruz (S3, S9, S11)." (We tell each other.)
Chatting online English	in2	"Sanal ortamda İngilizce konuşmaya çalışırız (S11)." (We try to speak English in the virtual environment.)

The tenth question was about the use of technology to learn English. All the students answered that they used technology, and eight students explained their answers in detail. Three students denoted they used social networking sites, whereas the other three students stated they watched videos to learn something. Two students remarked they learned everything through technology. Two students identified they used applications. The other two students emphasized they used technology to reach new information. Sample sentences were demonstrated in Table 14.

Table 14

Autonomy in Use of Technology

Sub-Category	Frequency (n)	Example Meaning Unit
Social Networking Sites	3	"...instagramda learn english tarzı sayfalarıda ayrıca takip ediyorum (S9)." (I also follow pages learn English kinds of pages on Instagram.)
Watching videos	3	"Dil bilgisi için de videolar izliyorum (S11)." (I also watch videos for grammar.)
Technology everything	is2	"Bilmediğim her şeyi teknoloji sayesinde öğrenebiliyorum (S1)." (I can learn everything I don't know through technology)
Applications	2	"Akıllı telefonumda ingilizce öğrenme programı olan duolingo ve sözlük bulunmakta (S3)." (There are duolingo, which is an application to learn English, and a dictionary on my smart phone).
Reaching information	new2	"...tüm teknolojik materyallerie ulaşıyorum (S3)." (I reach all technological materials.)

The last question sought if they evaluated their learning process or their language improvements. All the students but one told to specified they did evaluations. Nine students told they evaluated themselves, whereas one student told he used peer-evaluation. Out of nine students who told they evaluated themselves, four students expressed) they used evaluation to see their weaknesses, the other two students clarified they explored their weaknesses and studied) on them, and two students remarked they wanted to see their own progress. All the sub-categories were indicated in Table 15.

Table 15

Autonomy in Evaluation

Sub-Category	Frequency	Example Meaning Unit
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Self-evaluation-to see weaknesses	N=4	Nerelerde yanlış nerelerde doğru veya nerelerde takıldığıma dikkat ederim (S6).” (I pay attention to my mistakes, where I am right or I have problems.)
Self-evaluation-to overcome their weakness	N=2	“Tabi bunu eksiklerimi ve üstüne yoğunlaşmam gereken bölümü bulmak için yaparım (S8).” (Of course, I do it to find my weaknesses and the things to focus on.)
Self-evaluation-to monitor progress	N=2	“Kendini değerlendirme formlarını doldururum ve sürekli seviye belirleme testlerini çözüp ne kadar ilerlediğimi görürüm (S4).”
Peer evaluation	N=1	“Arkadaş çevremin katkılarıyla genellikle (S10).” (Usually thanks to my friends around.)

Discussion

This study was conducted to see whether tertiary students studying in a voluntary intensive English program in a state university were autonomous language learners. The second aim was to explore if there was any significant difference in language learning autonomy levels between genders. The last part of the study was dedicated to identifying some activities of these students corresponding to learning autonomy. To achieve these multiple aims, a mixed-method study was conducted. Autonomy Perception Scale was used to collect quantitative data, whereas an eleven questioned structured interview form was used to collect qualitative data. The results of each research question will be discussed below. This study will have important practical implications.

Primarily, the mean score of each question indicated which autonomous language learning activities were performed by the students in general. Out of thirty questions related to autonomous language learning activities, just seven of them received the scores that can be evaluated to be done by the students adequately. According to the mean scores, none of the activities were conducted efficiently. These results show that the students in this program do not conduct many autonomous language learning activities although they have chosen to study in this program. These students need to promote their autonomous activities to be more proficient language learners, so they should be informed about their situation, and some awareness-raising activities should be conducted.

In addition, mean scores of each student were calculated, and 32 students were identified as adequately autonomous language learners, which is 24, 8 % of all the students in the study. No students were identified to have efficient language learning autonomy. These students' current situation calls for immediate action since they have already finished their first semester and they have less time to achieve their goals. They should be motivated to try to learn English outside the class which is compulsory to be an autonomous language learner (Harmer, 2001) as well as being explained what to do to promote their language learner autonomy.

Secondly, there was no significant difference between females and males concerning language learner autonomy. This result contradicts with the results of Üstünlüoğlu (2009), which indicated female students engaged more with the activities which require autonomy, and Mardjuki (2018), which reflected different genders engaged in different autonomous

activities. However, Varol and Yilmaz (2010) could not obtain any significant difference between female and male language learners' autonomous activities. Abdel Razeq (2014) also did not attain any significant difference between female and male students' language learning autonomy perception. These studies demonstrate contradicting results, which proves the need for further studies in the area. For this study, the results may be since these students entered the university four months ago with similar university entrance exam results, so these students have not had enough time at university to differentiate between each other.

Thirdly, students were asked about the specific activities related to language learner autonomy. The questions consisted of language learning planning process, aims of language learning, searching for extra resources, use of communicative skills, grammar and vocabulary learning, use of technology, and assessment process, which was aimed to investigate the when where and how of autonomous language learning (Smith, 2003; Benson, 2016). Their answers were analyzed to get some ideas about how to promote language learner autonomy levels of all students. These findings are substantial since they come from language learners themselves rather than suppressed by researchers. If these findings are used to promote all students' autonomy levels, autonomous students will have paved the way for this process.

Initially, out of fourteen students who participate in the second part of the study, nine students have planned their learning process, which is the first responsibility one takes charge of during language learning. Secondly, twelve students look for extra materials, and nearly all of them use at least one kind of technological resource. These young adults were born into the technology era, and it is a crucial part of their lives, which affects their learning preferences, as well. Thus, these students can be promoted to use more technological resources to promote their autonomy and learning.

The next four questions are related to improving skills. All the students do something to improve their speaking skills, which they consider as the most significant part of learning a language in this communication era, so all students' competency can be encouraged by extra speaking activities, and a speaking club can be arranged for them, which will create another opportunity to talk. The second important part of a good communication is listening skill. Therefore, thirteen students try to improve their listening, and they use technology to this end such as listening to music, watching TV series, films, videos online. Corresponding to writing, eleven students try to improve it by writing or translating. It is a good improvement since these students learn English for academic or business purposes, so they will need to write in English. As the last skill, twelve students try to improve their reading skills through reading distinct materials. These findings comply with the autonomy literature as these are the parts of oral and written communication, and autonomous learners are defined as people who use the target language to be able to use it in the future (Littlewood, 1996; Macaro, 1997; Little, 2003).

The next questions are associated with developing grammar and vocabulary proficiency, respectively. Ten students do exercises, revise, or watch videos. Trying to learn grammar is particularly important as taking the responsibility to develop one's grammar requires autonomy (Pawlak, 2017). In addition, to develop their vocabulary knowledge, all of them apply different strategies such as using a dictionary, taking notes, keeping a vocabulary notebook. As all the students do at least one thing to improve their vocabulary knowledge, it

shows that they are aware of the importance of vocabulary while learning a language, and they take action related to it. Furthermore, Littlewood (1996) thinks autonomous learners are the ones who can choose their own ways to improve their grammar and vocabulary, which is the first prerequisite concern in autonomous communication.

The next question is with respect to interdependent learning, which means students learn during interaction with peers, and teachers (Little, 1991). The question focuses on peer interaction of interdependent learning. All students except for one study with their friends, or chat with them to learn English better. It is essential for them in an EFL environment since peer interaction gives them opportunities to use the target language and overcome the problems. The next question is associated with the use of technology to learn English. In addition to their previous answers where they identified a lot of technology use, here they all specify that they utilize technology frequently. As technology helps students to learn whatever they need out of class, it is their advantage to have explored this limitless resource. The last question is concerned the evaluation process which is one of the crucial steps of learner autonomy (Little, 2003; Paiva, 2011). Although thirteen students accept using evaluation in the language learning process, only nine of them denote their assessment. Whereas eight students use self-evaluation, one student prefers peer-evaluation. Evaluation is crucial in this process and calls for further action related to weaknesses; however, just two students emphasize working on weak points.

The findings of the study demonstrate that although the students in this program have made their own choices to study English, there are not efficiently autonomous learners; rather, there are only adequately autonomous language learners. There is no significant difference between male and female students. However, the data collected from adequately autonomous learners helps to gain some insight about young adult language learners. If their actions are developed, and they are projected to the whole population with the improvements, all the students can be helped to gain autonomy, which will help them not only in the second semester but also after the program.

In the long term, the data gathered should be included in the curriculum of the program. In the coming years if the students can be helped to develop autonomy at the beginning of the year (Ceylan, 2015), and they can use this substantial feature throughout their English learning process. In addition, having more efficiently and effectively autonomous learners may decrease the drop-out rates in this program which can be as high as 40 % in some years. The results of the study can also encourage the other intensive English programs in Turkey to investigate language learner autonomy levels of their students.

As for the limitations of the study, this population is exceedingly small population in terms of intensive English programs in Turkey. Further studies can be completed cross-programs to compare the results and generalize the findings better. Moreover, as this study is conducted at the end of the first semester, there is not a chance to see if these autonomous learners will be more successful at the end of the year, so further research should be done to compare their autonomy levels and success in learning English.

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Available online at:
<https://dergipark.org.tr/eltri/>
*International Association of Research
in Foreign Language Education and
Applied Linguistics*
ELT Research Journal
2020, 9(1), 108-122
ISSN: 2146-9814

The Effect of Using TV Advertisements on Iranian EFL Learners' Vocabulary Acquisition and Listening Comprehension

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Received: 2020-06-26 Accepted: 2020-06-30

Abstract

In English classrooms, teachers face different problems in teaching vocabulary items and finding a way to improve listening comprehension. The purpose of this study is to find a more practical way to make vocabulary learning and listening comprehension easier. This study aims to investigate the effect of using TV advertisements on Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary learning and improvement of listening comprehension. So, a quasi-experimental design was adopted to implement the study. Therefore, 46 upper-intermediate level students participated in this study which proceeded throughout an academic term. To see the effect of the proposed method, a paired t-test was implemented on data by R programming as well as a two samples t-test to investigate if there was any difference between male and female learners' acquisition and comprehension. As a result, the use of TV advertisements had a positive influence on the learners' vocabulary acquisition and improvement of listening comprehension regardless of the learners' gender.

Keywords: EFL learner, TV advertisement, Vocabulary acquisition, Listening comprehension.

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Introduction

Today, there is a general measure of agreement that 'knowing' a word involves knowing its spoken and written contexts of use, its patterns with words of related meaning as well as its collocation partners, and its syntactic, pragmatic, and discourse patterns. It means knowing a word actively and productively as well as receptively. Such understandings have clear implications for vocabulary teaching.

Vocabulary plays a very important role in learning a language. The more words one knows, the more he/she will be able to understand what they hear, and read, and as a result will be able to write in a more elective way. Vocabulary learning seems like one of the easiest steps in learning a language, but in fact, it is one of the most difficult ones to do. It even gets more crucial when it comes to EFL learners. These learners do not have sufficient opportunity to use a foreign language, and consequently face serious problems in learning and using words (Yongqi, 2003). As an essential skill for the language learning process, listening is extensively recognized (Goh, 2000; Mendelsohn, 2008). In order to have the process of decoding information which is very complex, stronger vocabulary competence is needed for listening comprehension. The example of research studies implemented in this field demonstrates that a faster and more effective word recognition than comprehending written input is needed (Matthews & Cheng, 2015) and they could be stated for this notion. The present study was conducted due to the lack of experimental research studies which intend to discover the role of vocabulary awareness in listening comprehension.

Review of the Related Literature

Teaching Vocabulary

Words are one of the most important parts of life. Undoubtedly, words change life continually and will continue to change it (Pikulski & Templeton, 2004). It was also proved that there is a very close relationship between English word storage and achievement in life. Low vocabulary knowledge is a kind of imperfection. Indeed, in order to get what someone is talking about or in order to perceive what is read, having acceptable word knowledge plays a crucial role (Shoebottom, 2013). Therefore, it can be specified that vocabulary knowledge plays a major role in learning a language.

On the importance of vocabulary, Wilkins (1972 as cited in Schmitt, 2012, p. 3) states “without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed”. Recently the effectiveness of rich vocabulary knowledge has been emphasized (Zahedi&Abdi, 2012). Unfortunately, language learners who are not successful in developing word knowledge could not comprehend texts of various kinds in advanced levels.

Teaching a foreign language is not just a concern of presenting grammatical structures. Knowledge on how a word or phrase should be used in order to convey meaning is also equally important. Therefore, one of the most substantial aspects when learning a language is to master how to broaden vocabulary (Thornbury, 2000). In fact, the first aspect of language that any person learns in his or her mother tongue is related to a set of words which help them communicate. According to Thornbury (2000, p. 1), “language emerges first as words, both historically, and in terms of the way each of us learned our first and any subsequent language”. Consequently, the more words the learners know, the more fluent they become whilst utilizing a foreign language. As Folse (2008, p. 12) states, “basic level of vocabulary will allow learners to communicate some ideas to a certain degree, better communication can be accomplished when learners have acquired more vocabulary”.

Words do not exist in isolation in a language. In other words, words are interwoven in a complex system in which knowledge of various levels of a lexical item is required in order to achieve a sufficient understanding in listening or reading and produce ideas successfully in speaking and writing. Richards (1994) contends that knowing a lexical item includes knowledge of word frequency, collocations, register, case relations, underlying forms, word association, and semantic structure. Without sufficient input, which is vocabulary, students will not be able to speak that language properly. The importance of vocabulary can be noticed from the rise of dawn till the present day. Kin and Rodman (1974) specify that our concern should be focused not only on the acquisition of grammar and pronunciation, but additionally on the acquisition of the basic units of meaning: vocabulary or lexical of language.

To enable students to use EFL, they should be taught the convenient words for everyday conversations which are called ‘common words’. Students should be taught these kinds of words to be able to speak and convey their simple ideas. When such words are learnt, the new language can immediately be put to use (Rupley and Nichols 1999).

Role of TV advertisements in EFL learning

Although TV commercial researchers have been supporting commercials as a language learning instrument, this source has never been actually established in the EFL classroom (Erkaya, 2005). Most of the studies which focused on the influence and efficiency of TV advertisements on English as a foreign language comprise classroom research and teachers' individual skills (Davis, 1997; Goldthorpe, 1993; Katchen, 1993). Using TV advertisements in the EFL classroom embrace lots of advantages for language teachers. For example, the size of TV advertisements is ideal for new language learners (Davis, 1997; Erkaya, 2005). In contrast with materials like TV shows or movies, TV commercials are not so long in a way that they make students bored. Additionally, they are selected easily since they do not last long.

Another great benefit is that TV advertisements embrace authentic content (Smith & Rawley, 1997). They have been constituted for native speakers and spoken in everyday English. In addition to this, not only the native speakers from one culture, but also TV commercials are created in many different English-speaking countries and make it possible for students to have access to a different types of English.

The Role of Vocabulary Knowledge in Listening Comprehension

Although previous studies have recognized a strong and significant relationship between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension (Ehsanzadeh, 2012; Qian, 2002; Stæhr, 2008), these studies (the results of these studies) cannot be generalized to listening comprehension. This is because "listening is not merely an auditory version of reading" (Lynch & Mendelsohn, 2002, p. 194). This is a strong motivation to discover the importance of the connection between vocabulary knowledge and listening comprehension.

More recently, Teng (2014) attempted to discover the predictive role of vocabulary knowledge in listening comprehension. There was a strong correlation between vocabulary load and listening comprehension as the findings in the study demonstrated.

The Significance of the Study and Research Questions:

The main goal of the present study is to establish an understanding of the vocabulary acquisition and listening comprehension of EFL learners through TV advertisements in Iranian context. Moreover, an attempt was made to examine whether using TV advertisements in class was an effective way of improving vocabulary acquisition and listening comprehension. Examining studies reported in the literature review section, one can reach the conclusion that the area of improvement of vocabulary learning and listening

comprehension in EFL classes still needs further research, especially in an EFL context like Iran.

1. Does utilizing TV advertisements have any effect on improving Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary learning?
2. Does utilizing TV advertisements have any effect on improving Iranian EFL learners' listening comprehension?
3. Is there any relationship between the gender of the students and their improvement in vocabulary and listening comprehension?

Methodology

Design of the Study

This study has a quasi-experimental design and without random assignment. According to Cook & Campbell (1979) the quasi-experimental research is a research which resembles experimental research but is not completely the same as experimental research. Although the independent variable is manipulated, participants are not randomly assigned to conditions or orders of conditions (Cook & Campbell, 1979). Forty-six English language learners (27 females and 19 males) were involved in this study. Participants were divided into two groups: The first group was the control group (13 females and 10 males) who received no treatment and the second group was the experimental group (14 females and 9 males) who received treatment. The aim of the researchers was to teach unnecessary unknown vocabulary items during 15 sessions with and without treatment (some selected TV advertisements) and then compare the results of the two groups to investigate the effectiveness of the treatment or in other words the effectiveness of TV advertisements (independent variable) on vocabulary learning and improvement of listening comprehension (dependent variables).

Participants

In this study the participants were selected from a well-known institute, in Tabriz, Iran. A total of 46 language learners (27 females and 19 males with an age range of 17-22) participated in the study. Students were selected from 4 classes which were 2 female and 2 male classes. Each course in this institute contains 15 sessions and there are three class hours a week. Teaching new topics, vocabulary, functions and improvement of listening skill are included in the course objectives. In order to have a further competence in communication, a

variety of social materials are used to activate vocabulary learning and listening comprehension. Participants' background languages are either Azeri as their mother tongue or Farsi language as the second language and official education language in Iran. Cambridge Flyer Proficiency Test was administered prior to starting the program in order to ensure that students' proficiency levels were homogeneous. The results of the proficiency test showed that all participants were at upper intermediate level.

Instruments

In order to make sure that all of the students are at approximately the same level (i.e. Upper intermediate level) the first instrument employed in this study is the *Cambridge Flyer Proficiency Test*. The test was based on four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. At the beginning of the program, the researchers drew on two tests, a pre-test which was taken by the experimental group and control groups for comparability. At the end of the treatment, a post-test was administrated to measure the effectiveness of the TV advertisements on vocabulary learning and listening comprehension. Other materials were appropriate English TV advertisements to the level of the students, which were employed to teach the vocabulary items and help students in understanding and improving listening comprehension, to the experimental group.

Procedure

Stage1: warm up

The initial stage was planned to appeal students' interest and create curiosity and activate their motivation as it is true with most of the activities. Researchers tried to accomplish this by generating a discussion context by means of open-ended questions so as to understand what the message they are trying to send is. Additionally, the discussion can begin by asking moral type questions about what is appropriate dress (such as asking the definition of appropriate dress). Still the teacher may want to create a survey or handout or develop predicting activities for this brainstorming activity.

Stage 2: viewing

Silent viewing and prediction:

The teacher started the commercial solely in the visual mode and put the following questions on a handout or on the board. The questions for this stage were provided in Table 1.

Table 1

Questions in viewing Stage

Brain storming	Eliciting background knowledge (vocabulary)
1. What is the advertised product in the commercial?	1. What is the purpose of the commercial?
2. What other elements do you see in the commercial?	2. Why does the advertiser use these particular elements?
3. Are there any new vocabulary in the commercial?	3. What are they?
4. What is the slogan of the commercial?	4. What message does the slogan try to communicate?

Viewing: securing adequate comprehension

The viewing phase was intended to focus students' attention on some aspect of the commercial relevant to the lesson being conducted: the content, the vocabulary. The teacher may show the TV commercial several times until she is certain that students understand the scenario and content. As students are viewing the commercial, teacher should ask for clarifications. Furthermore, the teacher may want to view the commercial merely in the visual mode initially to allow students to experience it with less input.

Watching advertisement with sound and securing listening comprehension:

The activities for the viewing stage require students to watch the commercial with a purpose. As with the previewing stage, the particular activities changed with the commercial being used. In the viewing stage, students first watch and listen to the commercials and write down what they comprehend about the advertisement. The teacher asks the students to take notes down on a paper if they hear any new words or phrases and try to explore their meaning by watching the whole advertisements while watching the advertisements. Students are given a text which is the whole advertisement passages in order to help them get the meaning on their own easily.

Stage 3: Post-viewing

The post-viewing stage was intended to engage students in using information from the commercials to evaluate what they learned and check their listening comprehension and integrate information. They had opportunities to ask questions regarding vocabulary, pronunciation, structures, and cultural themes. The post-viewing phase consisted of:

- Checking and learning the dialogs
- Checking the listening comprehension
- Assigning new vocabulary
- Practicing new vocabulary in group

The selected words were taught to the experimental group through listening and watching TV advertisements and to the control group through traditional instruction. Students in the control group were given the vocabulary items in English with their equivalents in their official educational language and second language (Farsi). They were allowed to use English-Persian dictionaries in their usual way, which is without special training. They were also permitted to ask the teacher to translate words when there was a need to do so. At the end of the program, one post-test was administered on the groups and all the collected data were analyzed by means of R programming.

Data Analysis and Results

TV advertisement effect on vocabulary acquisition

In order to measure the effect of TV advertisements on learners' vocabulary acquisition, a paired t-test was utilized in order to explore if there was a significant difference between learners' vocabulary score before and after the treatment for the experimental group and control group separately. Table 1 shows the output of the tests for both groups. It is seen from Table 1 that the mean value of the pre-test for both experimental and control groups are almost the same (around 80) while the corresponding mean values of the post-test for the experimental group (almost 85) is much higher than the control group (80.5). In order to investigate the significance of this improvement, the paired t-test was applied which employs the difference values between pre-test scores and post-test scores and compares its mean with zero.

The null hypothesis in the paired t-test was that the difference between the two tests is zero. Therefore, according to the p-values (almost zero 0.227 for the experimental and the control group, respectively), the difference between the scores of pre-test and post-test for the experimental group (4.87) is far from zero in contrast to the control group (0.35).

Table 1

The descriptive statistics for the pre-test and post-test vocabulary scores for the experimental and control group and the results of the paired t-tests.

Group	Test type	Mean	Standard deviation	t-statistics	p-value
Experimental	Pre-test	80.39	8.94		
	Post-test	85.26	7.23		
	difference	4.87	3.80	-6.13	0.000
Control	Pre-test	80.09	5.84		
	Post-test	80.43	5.96		
	difference	0.35	1.34	-1.25	0.227

In the following, to provide a visual representation of Table 1, the boxplots of Figure 1 indicate the scores of all groups within the same picture.

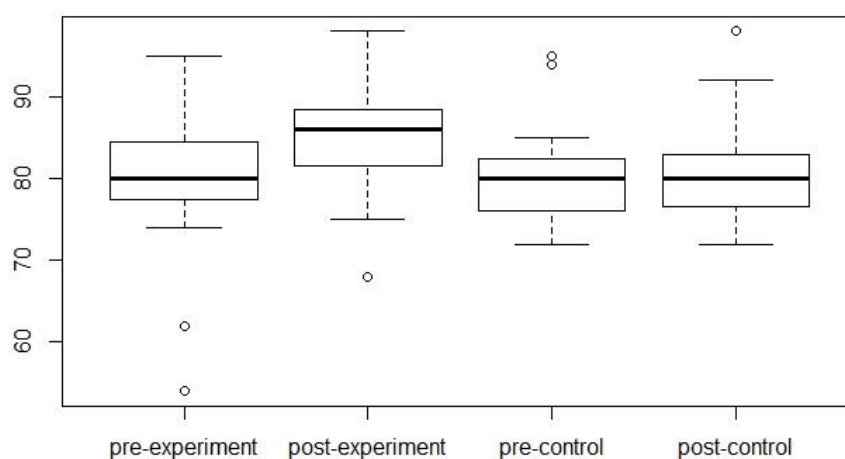


Figure1: The boxplots of pre-test and post-test vocabulary scores of the learners from both experimental and control groups.

TV advertisement effect on listening comprehension

The same method was implemented to investigate the effect of TV advertisements on learners' listening comprehension. Similar to the previous hypothesis for the vocabulary improvement, for the listening comprehension the paired t-test was used as well to test if there was a change in the learners' listening comprehension score in the experimental group or not. In the following, Table 2 represents the results for the listening skill.

Table2

The descriptive statistics for pre-test and post-test listening comprehension scores of the experimental and control groups and the results of the paired t-tests.

Group	Test type	Mean	Standard deviation	t-statistics	p-value
Experimental	Pre-test	71.61	8.82		
	Post-test	76.7	8.10		
	difference	5.09	4.48	-5.44	0.000
Control	Pre-test	73.96	8.07		
	Post-test	74.78	7.33		
	difference	0.83	2.41	-1.86	0.11

Based on the values of Table 2, the mean of listening comprehension scores of the experimental group before watching TV advertisements (around 72) was even less than control group results (almost 74) while the mean of the post-test listening scores for the experimental group (almost 77) was higher than the mean of the post-test listening scores of the control group (around 75). However, as mentioned earlier, the null hypothesis of the tests in Table 2 is that the difference between the mean value of the listening scores of pre-test and post-test equals zero which means TV advertisements had no effect on the learners' listening comprehension proficiency. It is obvious from Table 2 that the null hypothesis cannot be accepted for the experimental group in which the mean of the differences is more than 5 score unlike the control group in which the mean of the differences is less than 1 score. In conclusion, the experimental group learners' listening comprehension ability improved while it was almost the same for the control group. Moreover, Figure 2 demonstrates a graphical representation of Table 2 to provide a further understanding.

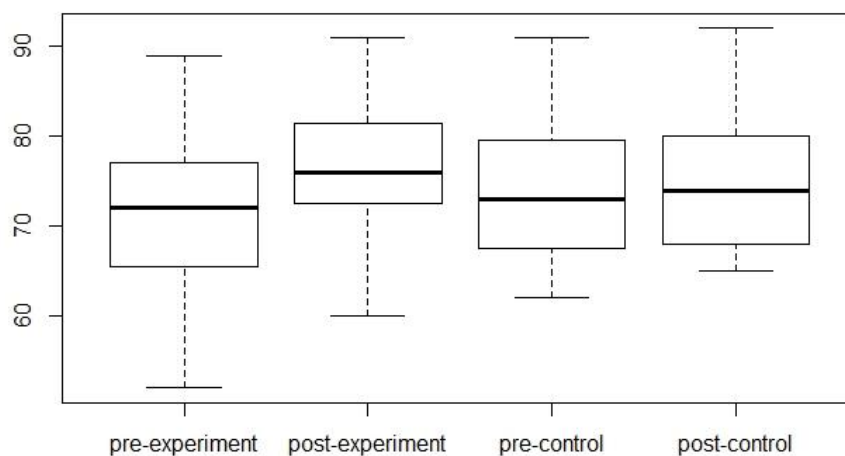


Figure2: The boxplots of pre-test and post-test listening scores of the learners from both experimental and control groups.

Difference between genders in the improvement level of vocabulary and listening

For the third hypothesis which contemplates the equality of the vocabulary and listening comprehension improvement means for male and female learners, a two-sample t-test is (was) performed.

Table 3

The descriptive statistics of the vocabulary and listening score improvements for the experimental group in terms of gender as well as the two-sample t-test outputs.

Skill	Group	Mean	Standard deviation	t-statistics	p-value
Vocabulary improvement	female	5.28	3.81		
	male	4.22	3.92		
	t-test			0.64	0.53
Listening improvement	female	5.07	4.59		
	male	5.11	4.56		
	t-test			-0.02	0.98

According to Table 3, although the mean of the vocabulary score improvement is higher for female learners (5.28) than male learners (4.22), there is no statistically significant difference due to the high p-value (0.53). Similarly, in terms of listening comprehension, the difference between male and female score improvement is not statistically significant since the p-value is higher than 0.05.

To sum up, the scores of listening comprehension and vocabulary learning enhanced by using TV advertisements in the EFL class. On the other hand, there was no gender-based difference in the learner's improvement in terms of vocabulary and listening comprehension. To have a further understanding of the mentioned comparison between genders, Figure 3 represents the boxplot of the scores related to vocabulary acquisition and listening comprehension improvement regarding different genders.

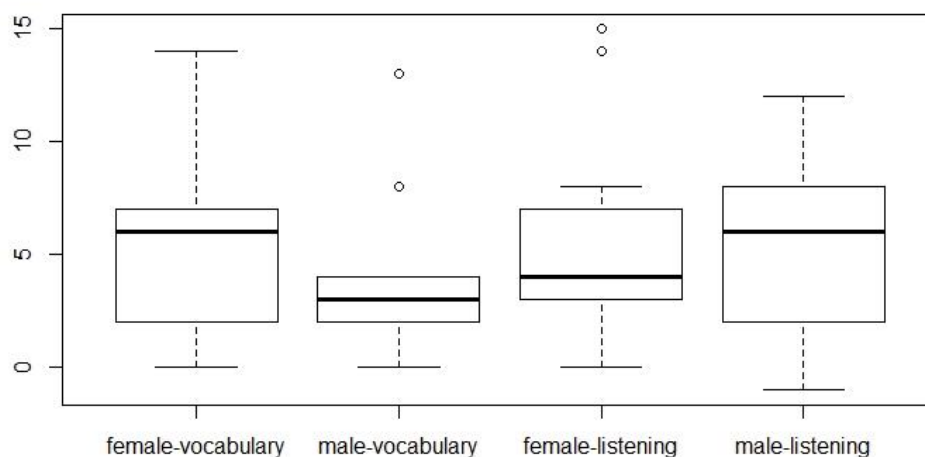


Figure 2: The boxplots related to the improvement of the scores for the vocabulary acquisition and listening comprehension skills in terms of gender.

Discussion and Conclusion

In spite of the fact that making use of authentic materials in classrooms is not a new technique, there is a limited number of studies on the effects of TV advertisements on lexis learning and listening comprehension. Tuzi et al. (2012) investigated the effect of TV advertisements on ESL/EFL learning. They discovered that TV ads are useful for language learning due to their inherent characteristics, i.e., the shortness of advertisements (30-50 seconds). They also specified that advertisements are created in many English-speaking countries and this results in providing the opportunity of having access to a variety of Englishes. They concluded that through using advertisements learners' language learning improved significantly.

Davis (1997) and Lee (1994) also found that students who were exposed to TV advertisements performed better in listening. They also claimed that students were of higher motivation for language learning. They refer to the contextual clues of advertisements which help learners to get the linguistic meaning of them. Ozdemir (2007) argued that it is better for teachers to utilize the original intent of advertisements and their cultural elements to teach critical thinking and culture. Fox (2002) also highlighted the role of advertisements in teaching/learning processes.

All of the studies which were conducted on the effects of TV advertisements on language learning support its crucial role on vocabulary learning and listening comprehension as well as other skills.

In this study the researchers attempted to investigate the effect of TV ads on improving vocabulary learning and listening comprehension. The statistical results revealed that there was a significant improvement in the performance of the learners in terms of both vocabulary acquisition and listening comprehension through TV advertisements. The findings also reflected that there was no significant difference regarding the mentioned improvement in both of the skills between males and females.

The results of this study suggest a number of implications which need to be taken into consideration by EFL teachers, educators, textbooks writers, and syllabus designers. In order to have successful learning in EFL classes, advertisements can be recommended as a useful material. By this means, learners would learn that the essential factor in learning a foreign language is not only knowing the text itself, but also gaining knowledge to interpret it appropriately in order to respond to it correctly. Teachers can help the learners to be independent by knowing how to show the learners to improve different language areas instead of using solely textbooks. For further studies, researchers suggest that watching TV advertisements can be beneficial to learners' pronunciation, speaking skill and accent improvement.

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